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THE TIMES

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Ministers condemn British fish war violence

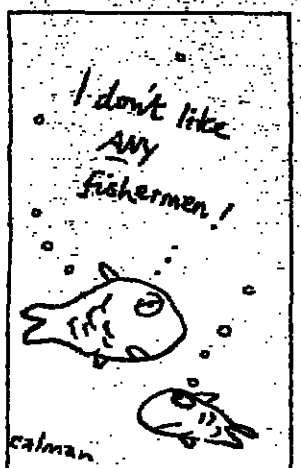
By MICHAEL HORNESBY AND RAY CLANCY

BRITISH fishermen were denounced as daft and criminal by ministers yesterday after they adopted French-style tactics to protest against falling fish prices that trawlermen on both sides of the Channel blame on cheap imports.

A Russian factory ship, the *Romb*, was under police guard in Peterhead harbour, north-east Scotland, last night after an attack by more than 50 Scottish fishermen. In Grimsby, on Humberside, English trawlermen and dock workers formed a picket to prevent the unloading of French fish.

The Grimsby men's action was in retaliation for attacks on consignments of British and other foreign fish by French trawlermen. Seven gendarmes were injured, three seriously, during three hours of clashes yesterday with 1,000 trawlermen in Nantes in north-west France.

Sir Hector Monro, the Scottish fisheries minister, condemned the attack on the Russian trawler in Peterhead as not only criminal but damaging to the Scottish industry. "Last night's action undermines the considerable effort that we have made to protect



Scottish exports to France." David Curry, the junior agriculture minister in charge of fishing, said: "This is pretty damn daft. I spent most of last week negotiating with the French to ensure that our fish would be protected and compensation for damage would be paid."

Fishermen's leaders disclaimed any role in orchestrating the events in Peterhead and Grimsby, which they said were spontaneous.

Last night French fishermen hailed the attack on the Russian trawler but said they would not resort to their opposition to British imports.

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French fury: a fisherman confronts a gendarme as another rioter throws away boxes of shrimps during the ransacking of a refrigerated warehouse in Nantes, yesterday

Tory grassroots back anti-Maastricht MPs

By PHILIP WEBSTER, ARTHUR LEATLEY AND NICHOLAS WOOD

■ There is a mood of deepening bitterness in the Conservative party as warring factions refuse to call a truce over Europe

JOHN Major's efforts to contain the Conservative revolt over Maastricht took another knock yesterday as evidence mounted of grassroots backing for the rebels who inflicted his first Commons defeat.

With his party's internal warfare deepening, the prime minister faced further embarrassment with the disclosure that Michael Portillo had lunched with Bryan Gould, Labour's arch Euro-critic. The two are known to have discussed Maastricht.

The encounter last month—before Mr Portillo's lunch with Baroness Thatcher and other Euro-sceptics—was portrayed last night as innocent, but in the fevered atmosphere at Westminster it was regarded as further evidence of underlying cabinet tensions over European policy.

Conservative Euro-enthusiasts are now planning a fresh offensive against the rebels tomorrow, and ministers are pinning their hopes on a backlash in the constituencies

in the next few weeks to bring the dissidents into line. But a survey by *The Times* yesterday suggested that many of the 26 Tories who voted against the government on Monday night did so with the support of their constituencies.

Sir George Gardiner, who was barracked by many of his colleagues when he rose during prime minister's question time yesterday, had the blessing of his Reigate association when he voted with the opposition. Douglas Simpson, the chairman, said: "Sir George has always consulted with us and has our full backing. We recently had a debate in which the vote against the treaty was two-to-one. We have every faith that he will do the right thing each time."

Most of the senior officials contacted by *The Times* expressed similar support for their MPs. One accused the

government of "crying wolf" in its claims that backbench revolts could jeopardise the treaty and said that people started to feel bitter if they felt they were being bullied.

Even so, ministers were confident yesterday that the message they started sending out at Harrogate at the weekend was getting through to party members and would eventually be transmitted to the MPs. It was said that the Harrogate operation was never aimed solely at Monday night's vote and would bear fruit as the committee and report stages of the bill wore on into the summer.

Mr Major again vowed last night to ratify the treaty by the autumn, although some ministers suggested that the Commons might have to sit in August to get the bill through.

The prime minister was cheered loudly by loyalist MPs

when he arrived in the Commons yesterday after only the second defeat to be suffered by the Conservative government since 1979. But he was accused by John Smith of foolishness and obstinacy in opposing the successful Labour amendment. "Far from being stabbed in the back, you shot yourself in the foot," the Labour leader told him.

Mr Major responded that the treaty was in the national interest and delay in ratifying it was damaging industry, investment and jobs. He later



Gardiner: had full constituency support

told Poul Rasmussen, the Danish prime minister, that Britain would still ratify the treaty by the end of the parliamentary session. Throughout the day, ministers tried to dismiss a defeat they had warned would have damaging repercussions as "trivial" and "minor". Amid widespread accusations that the government had bungled its tactics in the run-up to the vote, they said they had in the end accepted the inevitability of defeat in the interests of flushing out the rebels.

But their efforts failed to lift the mood of deepening bitterness between the two factions within the party, and Euro-enthusiasts voiced anger that ministers appeared to be concentrating their fire on Labour and the Liberal Democrats rather than the Tory rebels. The loyalists accused the dissidents of undermining the prospects of economic recovery and strengthening the hands of federalists.

Europe's malaise, page 2
Simon Jenkins, and
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Fire chiefs contest law

By TONY DAVIS

BRITAIN'S fire chiefs will call today for an end to Crown immunity because they fear it is putting thousands of lives at risk.

They will tell MPs that there can be no justification for the legal anomaly that places hundreds of Crown properties, including government offices and royal buildings, beyond the law.

In a series of articles this week, *The Times* has revealed that fire safety standards in the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace and many government buildings are inadequate.

Immunity condemned, page 9

Devolution ruled out in Major's package for Scots

By JONATHAN PRYNN

JOHN Major's general election pledge to "take stock" of Scotland's role in the United Kingdom has yielded a package of 50 measures aimed at giving new powers to the Scottish Office and MPs north of the border.

Ian Lang, the Scottish secretary, told MPs amid stormy scenes in the Commons yesterday that the government would continue to "reject utterly" any moves towards devolution or home rule. The proposals, contained in a white paper, *Scotland in the Union: A Partnership for Good*, were dismissed by Labour as "sheer tokenism ... and tired policies".

The 11-month review of the governance of Scotland is believed to be the first major reappraisal of the constitutional relationship with England in the 286-year history of the Union of the two countries. Mr Major said in a foreword to the white paper that it was the government's duty to address "genuine, if sometimes unformed" fears that Scotland had less to gain from the Union than England.

The white paper proposals give the Scottish general committee of all Scottish MPs increased debating time and powers to question ministers, but all important votes will continue to be taken on the floor of the House of Commons. Mr Lang told MPs: "The integrity of Parliament will and must remain intact."

Other proposals include an extension of the Scottish office network of branches throughout Scotland and a telephone hot-line for enquiries from the public. Mr Lang said they represented only the beginning of the process of taking stock. The government would "continue to seek further ways of strengthening the union".

Lang defends Union, page 10
The slow road, page 18

Teachers' union votes to boycott tests

By JOHN O'LEARY

EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of thousands of pupils face a summer of classroom chaos after a teachers' union announced yesterday that its members would boycott all national curriculum testing and assessment.

Members of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers voted overwhelmingly for industrial action short of strikes in protest at the extra work involved in tests which they also oppose on educational

grounds. The boycott is likely to start within two weeks with teachers abandoning their assessment of pupils due to sit tests next term.

Children are graded on a combination of test results and classroom assessment, which has already started for many seven-year-olds. However, it is the new tests at 11 and 14 which will be most vulnerable to union campaigns.

The National Association of Head Teachers has advised its members not to participate in the pilot tests at 11, as has the National Union of Teachers.

which is also likely to boycott the English tests for 14-year-olds. This new vote will prompt calls for other unions to sanction wider action.

Baroness Blatch, the education minister, described the latest action as unprofessional. "Pupils have nothing to fear from these tests and everything to gain."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the schoolmasters' association, said: "What now needs to happen is for the government to go back and start all over again on testing."

Mr de Gruchy accepted that

teachers taking part in the boycott would be in breach of contract, but advice that their action would constitute a legitimate trade dispute. Other unions have been given conflicting advice, and the question may be tested in court before the main action takes place in June.

Most of the association's 127,000 members are in secondary schools, where the opposition to the current testing proposals is strongest.

Boycott vote, page 5

Cult leader 'too mad' for talks

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WACO, TEXAS

THE FBI has resigned itself to the belief that David Koresh, the cult leader holed up with his followers outside Waco, Texas, may not be sane enough to hold negotiations.

In the past few days the full instability of Mr Koresh's mind has become apparent. The FBI now paints a picture of a volatile, irritable and aggressive fanatic who, if he is not deranged, is giving a very passable impression of it.

The authorities are ready to match his every gesture, however bizarre. The latest example of this was the reaction to Mr Koresh's claims to have explosives and rockets capable of destroying armoured personnel carriers: far from backing off, the authorities announced they were bringing in 67-tonne Abrams battle tanks. The FBI is, however, well aware that it has reached a stalemate with the leader of the Branch Davidians.

Cult leader, page 14

Britain keeps out Bosnian asylum seekers

By EVE-ANN PRENTICE

DIPLOMACY CORRESPONDENT

WHEN her mother was butchered by Serbs in Bosnia, four-year-old Elma Gredan could only watch spellbound with horror. Now she pleads for her father, one of thousands of victims of the Balkan conflict who cannot gain a visa to visit Britain, according to refugee and aid agencies.

Elma's father managed to throw the child from a win-

dow at their home in Bosanski Petrovac just before the militiamen who slaughtered her mother turned their attention to beating him. An aunt discovered the child two days later, lying injured from the fall outside her home. Elma was eventually brought to England.

Many of those who survived the brutality of detention camps, "ethnic cleansing", sniper fire and mortar shells are also effectively

robbed of freedom of movement if they do gain entry to Britain. They are required to report regularly and in person to police or local authority officials. "People are not allowed to move from town to town," it is like a parole system," said Majid Patel of the Indian Muslim Welfare Society in Batley, West Yorkshire. A Home Office spokesman said: "When a person makes an application for asylum, we need to know where

that person is. Some people may have tighter restrictions than others. They may be asked to report on a regular basis."

Voluntary and government-funded refugee agencies say they despair over what they feel is Britain's foot-dragging over letting refugees enter the country. Over 6,400 citizens of former Yugoslav republics Continued on page 2, col 1

Aid turned back, page 12

BREITLING

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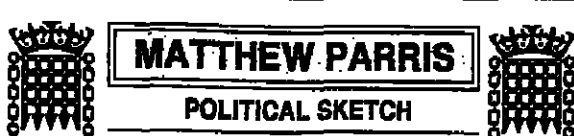
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Be wary of Tories bearing goodwill

John Major entered the chamber yesterday to the most enormous cheer.

There is something blood-curdling about the Conservative Party cheering. It is more chilling than their enmity. Resonating within it is the folk-memory of a thousand treacheries. In recent months the cheering has been growing louder. Yesterday it approached the pitch accorded his predecessor in the weeks before her followers knifed her. If Tories carry on cheering Major like this, he would be wise to bring bodyguards.

But he came alone, sitting not yards from Peter Lilley, who has now regained control of his facial muscles. Like a little boy ordered to wipe that grin off his face, Lilley's expression was frozen at a bleak setting.

The prime minister arrived in the final minute before he was to take the floor. As the digital clock flicked to 3.14, and still no prime minister, faces on the government front bench tightened. None who knows Mr Major ever quite discounts the possibility that he might just send a note saying he had gone back to mother.

He did turn up, and great was the cheering. What remained of defence questions was inaudible as late arrivals jostled to find a place. Jabbering filled the air.

It was like the atmosphere at sunset at an African waterhole as the animals come down to drink. Jackals sniffed the wind, hyenas giggled among themselves, and smaller scavengers sneaked their way to ring-side seats. On the front benches, big cats stretched or snarled in a desultory way, while monkeys chattered. Here and there a crocodile lifted an inquisitive eye above the surface of the pond.

Excitement centred on the first question. It came from Sir Roger Moore (C, Faversham) an unusually keen

Euro-sceptic, but an unusually nice one. Would he, could he, turn the knife now?

He wouldn't. Sir Roger reminded MPs that not every Tory doubter would embarrass the PM by supporting the social chapter; and he would not. A small gesture, but, at that critical moment, a significant one. It signalled that the rebels, having pushed their leader to the cliff's edge, would draw back from the final heave. It was both helpful to John Major and, somehow, humiliating too. He thanked Sir Roger.

Then destiny, or Miss Boothroyd, was wry enough to call Sir George Gardiner (C, Reigate). Tall, thin and stooped, with the voice and manner of a stage villain in a Victorian melodrama, Sir George's world view has never quite recovered its poise since Salazar fell. But he should be on song for he hates Maastricht. Gardiner on song is sheer made flesh. Would he twist the knife?

He refrained. Or we think he refrained. We think he was trying to be nice though it is hard to know what Sir George, being nice would sound like, as we have so little experience. He recited a long list of all he agreed with the PM about: everything except the central plank of Mr Major's belief-system: Europe. Gardiner did not, as he might have done, end his message of qualified amity by remarking that he liked Major's tie.

But the PM got some genuine support three hours later, in the debate on unemployment. In a thoughtful and imaginative speech about manufacturing, Sebastian Coe (C, Falmouth & Camborne) took risks both with the Tory style and with Commons right. "We make things," he concluded, and sat down. MPs gasped. They had never heard so short a sentence at Westminster.

Asylum seekers kept out

Continued from page 1

have applied for asylum in Britain but not one person has been given permission to stay in the country permanently. Another 35,000 to 40,000 are in the country on visitors' visas, which allow them to stay for six months provided they can show they will be financially self-sufficient while here. Many of these are young people who were sent to stay with relatives already living in Britain when the Yugoslav bloodshed began.

While Elma yearns in Batley for sight of her father, another Bosnian Muslim, Izmet Bajromovic, lives in daily fear for the life of his 70-year-old mother who is stranded in the Serb-surrounded village of Bosanski Most. Mr Bajromovic is being sheltered by the North Yorkshire Refugee Centre in Harrogate.

Wynn Jones, who runs the refugee organisation, said yesterday: "The Serbs have promised her safe passage if she is given a visa to enter Britain. She has not been 'ethnically cleansed' because they say she is too old. But we have learned from bitter experience that we have to deal carefully, slowly and through proper legal channels with each case. We know from past record that they will not let her in, so we have not yet made a formal application for her. She is stuck there."

Mr Jones added: "Every family at our centre has mothers, fathers sons and daughters in Croatia, Slovenia or Germany and they can't get to see them. This is tearing families apart. The people here think that when their families escape detention camps or siege areas, they will soon be reunited."

"We have pleaded with the Home Office to speed up applications and to let people come over, but they are rats," he said.

Britain's record for accepting refugees from the former Yugoslavia compares poorly with other European states. Nearly a million Muslims and Croats from Bosnia have fled the war. Half are in Croatia and the rest scattered around Europe. Germany has taken about 250,000, although Bonn is about to tighten its asylum laws, while Sweden has 80,000, Austria 73,000 and Hungary 40,000.

Aid turned back, page 12

Tory rebels win local support

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY

SURPRISING support for the Tory rebels came yesterday from their constituency parties.

Joan Benton, chairman of Northampton North association, whose MP Anthony Marlow is one of the leading anti-Maastricht campaigners, accused the government of "crying wolf" too often in its claims that backbench revolts could jeopardise the treaty.

"People start to get bitter if they feel they are being bullied and there is a dislike of bullying tactics. The government needs to adopt some subtlety," she said.

Sir George Gardiner joined those voting against the government after pulling out of the rebel camp at the last moment before November's crucial vote. Douglas Simpson, his Reigate constituency association president, said: "George has always consulted with us and has our full backing. We recently had a

debate in which the vote against the treaty was two to one."

Most of the 13 chairmen contacted by *The Times* expressed similar support. However, two new MPs who voted against the government yesterday felt the force of local discontent. Anthony Arnold, Tory chairman in the Vale of Glamorgan seat which Walter Sweeney won for the first time last April, criticised the MP's vote. "I have had many calls from people voicing displeasure and I am disappointed at the defeat and that my own MP contributed to it."

Andrew Hunter, MP for Basingstoke, is likely to face criticism at the local Conservative association's annual meeting on Friday. Tim Laws, association chairman, said he regretted the dissent vote. "It is unfortunate in view of John Major's remarks on Saturday."

Nicholas Budgen's long-running disagreement with his party workers over Europe surfaced again when Roseanne Williams, chairman of the Wolverhampton South West association, said: "This has made many people very cross but there appears to be nothing we can do to change Nick's mind. It is very sad."

After Maastricht vote: British wrangling is symptom of wider malaise

Silent partners wait for Major's move

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS AND TOM WALKER IN STRASBOURG

"DON Quixote rides on," murmured one diplomat yesterday as the rest of the EC digested John Major's Maastricht defeat in Parliament and Europe's governments resigned themselves, more in pity than in anger, to wait and see if the prime minister can regain control of events.

Months of knife-edge battles across the Continent over the treaty have taught the great and good of Brussels to stay mum about the upsets which keep threatening to derail and delay the treaty. "Only the final result counts," was all M Delors' careful spokesman would say yesterday of the battle in London.

No one in Brussels even mentions the fact that the beleaguered German government, proud radical advocate of political union for Europe, has not even completed ratification formalities. The German parliament has voted but

the state president cannot notify the EC of his country's assent until the supreme court deals with a case brought by a former official of the European Commission complaining that the treaty is incompatible with the German constitution. The official was dismissed from his senior job in Brussels the moment he signed a public appeal for a

German referendum. Some German legal experts believe that the case is not a foregone conclusion and could go against the government.

Last year, Britain's EC partners could smirk at the spectacle of Mr Major assailed by problems over pit closures, the economy and Maastricht, while being reassured by ministers and diplomats that there was a solid majority in the Commons in favour of the treaty. However, confidence that the long, arcane struggle

in the Commons would have a happy ending has evaporated. The arm-twisting and legal zig-zagging in Britain are only the most visible symptom of a wider malaise. "Europe" has lost the power to energise politicians. The treaty is no longer an exciting charter but a long, hard slog.

Despondency is mixed with resurgent worry about Germany. Chancellor Kohl is sinking into deep political mud at home, has kept silent on French enthusiasm for accelerating monetary union and none of the candidates to succeed him share his passion for a federal Europe.

EC politicians are discreet about the treaty battles in Britain and Denmark partly because they have learnt that non-interference makes sense, but also because other prime ministers do not feel like pointing fingers. The Italian cabinet is falling apart under its handling of corruption trials, France's socialist administration looks set to be defeated at the polls this

month, and Spain's left-wing government is facing three million unemployed.

Recovery from recession and ratification of the treaty would cure some of the depression. But anxieties about the EC's future have deeper roots. Chancellor Kohl, M Delors and President Mitterrand have discovered that Europe cannot be rearranged by governments alone. Voters need to be asked their opinions. All three men are now forced to talk the language of participation, unsure whether the EC will work with people and governments mulling with the levers of power.

The British government was defeated over a minor item in the treaty designed to provide some of that extra accountability. The treaty sets up a "Committee of the Regions" to advise the Commission on spending in the regions. In particular the poorest and most far-flung, Britain will get £1.2 billion this year.

Jean-Pierre Cot, leader of the socialists in the European

Parliament, stood by the Labour party's tactics on the treaty. He said he was "dismayed at the way the whole business has been handled by the British government".

Sir Christopher Prout, leader of the conservative group in the European parliament, said the government's humiliation would "raise further doubts about Britain's attractiveness in the minds of job-creating foreign investors".

□ The fresh uncertainty over Britain's ratification of the treaty was greeted with delight by Denmark's Euro-sceptics yesterday (Sheila Gunn writes from Copenhagen). When Britain hesitates, Denmark traditionally also falters.

With so much riding on securing a "yes" vote in the second referendum on May 18, the government's humiliation in the Commons on Monday can only cause more doubts among the sceptical Danes. Knud Peter Pedersen, of the Danish "People's Movement" against the EC, said: "Anything that will delay Brit-

ish ratification will help us." He said that Denmark's decision to join the EC was greatly influenced by British entry. "We felt that if Britain joined, it could not be so bad."

The main Danish political parties, like those in Britain, favour closer European integration. However, that did not halt the "no" vote by 50.7 per cent against ratification of the treaty last June. Waiting for the rescue package of opt-outs to be sanctioned for the Danes has already delayed ratification in Britain by months.

Mr Major may come to regret the concession he threw to doubting Tory MPs last November of no third reading until after the second Danish referendum. By making that commitment, he effectively linked the fate of Britain's ratification process to the Danish result.

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Diary, page 18
Leading article and
letters, page 19

Defeat is blow to Clark's selection

By JAMIE DETTMER

THE government's Maastricht vote defeat in the Commons on Monday is already having reverberations in Newbury, where a by-election is to be held.

As the local Conservative Association gets down to choosing a candidate to defend the late Mrs Judith Chaplin's 12,357 majority over the Liberal Democrats, the chances of Alan Clark, the former defence minister,

emerging victorious from the selection procedure appears to have been dealt a fatal blow.

The Tories in the west Berkshire seat, who had been considering Mr Clark, now emphasise that they want a candidate who will support the government. This would seem to rule out the fiercely anti-European Mr Clark from making a Commons comeback.

"We are looking for a candidate who will back the government," said Mrs Rosemary Sanders-Rose, the president of the Newbury association. "We don't necessarily want a local figure. We want someone who can play their full part in national and international politics like Judith Chaplin was able to do."

According to local Conservatives, the front runners now include four former ministers: John Maples, Francis Maude, David Trippier and Michael Fallon.

However, with the chill



Hard times: a man sells trinkets in the doorway of an empty shop in Newbury, which hardly knew unemployment before the recession

wind of recession biting deeply into the town's economy, the impending poll is being greeted by the Liberal Democrats as their best chance yet of capturing a seat that has returned a Conservative in every election since 1924. It is being viewed by local Tories as the toughest test they have faced since Labour secured 40 per cent of the Newbury constituency vote in the 1950s.

While the Maastricht row continued apace in Westminster yesterday, Newbury Conservative officials tried to play

down the government's defeat and said that it would not affect the outcome of the by-election, which could be called any time between mid-April and mid-July.

Although few Newbury shoppers, either pro or anti-Maastricht, yesterday understood the substance of what was being debated, most viewed the defeat as a severe blow to the Conservatives and said they felt even less confidence in the leadership of John Major. "It will affect how I vote in the by-election," said

Susan Lavender, 45. "I'm against the treaty and normally a Conservative, but now I think I'm going to support the Liberal Democrats." Like other anti-European Conservatives considering switching their vote, Mrs Lavender saw no conflict between her anti-Maastricht position and backing the pro-European Liberal Democrats.

The Liberal Democrats believe that the government defeat on Monday further adds to the impression that the Conservatives are in disarray.

But Bob Mowatt, the Liberal Democrat agent, believes it will be the state of the local economy that is likely to decide the by-election.

In the 1980s, Newbury, which was then nicknamed Thatchertown, hardly knew unemployment and basked in its strategic position in the "silicon valley" corridor between London and Bristol. Hi-tech firms like Vodaphone, Sony and National Panasonic queued up to build plants on greenfield sites on the town's outskirts. Now, the west Ber-

shire newspapers are full of reports of record bankruptcies, business failures and rising unemployment. Up to a fifth of commercial property in the area is empty, unemployment has risen by 125 per cent since 1987 and more than a third of local companies are operating pay freezes.

If the Liberal Democrats can convince voters the government is the culprit for the failing local economy, they could secure the 9.4 per cent swing they need to win the seat.

Ministers are stirred but the government is unshaken

AFTER the thunderstorm, senior ministers yesterday surveyed the wreckage and concluded that little permanent damage had been done. The Maastricht bill is still likely to be approved later this year. That is also the view of most of the Tory Euro-sceptics who helped to defeat the government. Only a handful of the most zealous rebels believe they can either stop the bill or force the government to concede a referendum, which is still opposed by ministers and Labour leaders.

Ministers and Euro-sceptics yesterday played down the defeat on what all accept is a minor matter. Tory MPs rallied round John Major promised to press on, while making no threats against the rebels, and Sir George Gardiner, a prominent Euro-sceptic, offered a hollow-sounding pledge of loyalty. With friends like that...

Mr Major's authority has obviously been damaged, though the direct impact of Monday's defeat is so far just on the timing of the bill's passage. That is because there will now have to be a report stage. Estimates for that vary from six hours to six weeks. Government business managers have talked about an extra three weeks.

The list of permissible amendments will be reviewed afresh by the Speaker, who will want to be seen to be fair to all sides. Amendments already considered cannot be

debated again. The government will be lucky to complete the committee stage before the end of April because of delays already caused by the changing legal advice on the social chapter. With a report stage now necessary, the government will be doing very well to get the bill out of the Commons by the late May recess, and the third reading could be well into the summer. That

may not leave enough time for the Lords to approve the bill before the August recess.

The delay was yesterday dismissed by world-weary senior ministers as just tiresome. The publicity may not help Britain's position in the EC. But, as one senior minister said yesterday, after the paving debate last November most other EC governments have given up trying to understand our parliamentary system.

Although uncertainties over the outcome could adversely affect the second Danish referendum in mid-May, the intricacies of the report stage are not whispered in the corridors of Europe. Ministers believe that other EC leaders accept the government's determination to ratify.

The effect on the rest of the government's legislation has

not so far been great, despite complaints from the Home Office. Because the current session is unusually long, several major bills, such as those on education, trade unions, asylum, and housing and urban development, have already passed through the Commons. However, one or two measures could be squeezed out and the time-consuming finance bill is still to come.

There is little the government can do. The rebels have so far been unmoved by the weekend appeals to unity and threats of removing the whip or deselection are largely empty. The government just has to manoeuvre within the constraint of not having a reliable Commons majority on the bill. Like any other minority government, the Tories have to do deals, as they did on Monday with the Scottish and Welsh nationalists, and hope that, if the bill looks seriously threatened, the Liberal Democrats and possibly a majority of pro-EC Labour MPs will not obstruct its passage.

The Tory whips may talk tough to create a reaction against the rebels, muttering to the gullible about August sittings, and they may try a few all-night sittings, and even a weekend one. But they can only be patient, relying on the classic Fabian maxim of the inevitability of gradualness. It may not be glorious, but there is, as someone would have said, no alternative.

Delay gives boost to petition

By LIN JENKINS

CAMPAIGNERS for a referendum on the Maastricht treaty yesterday roared the Tory rebels for boosting their cause.

The vote for the amendment forcing the bill into a report stage will give campaigners longer to collect millions of signatures on a petition in support of a popular vote. The Maastricht Referendum Campaign (MRC) has already sent out 10,000 petition forms to groups likely to back them. Russell Lewis, its director,

said: "We are heartened by the vote and think that it is indicative. It is the House of Commons indicating the growing momentum of disillusionment with the Maastricht treaty. From our point of view it should extend the time we have to mobilise this discontent."

Mr Lewis embraces all political viewpoints and was launched with the support of Bryan Gould, who resigned from the shadow cabinet over Europe. Bill Cash, the leading Tory rebel, and Nick Harvey, Liberal Democrat MP for Devon North.

Baroness Thatcher, the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Stoddart of Swindon are patrons of the campaign, which is funded by various private sources.

Portillo lunch date raises eyebrows

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A FRESH question mark over cabinet unity on Europe was raised last night after it was disclosed that Michael Portillo had met Bryan Gould, Labour's leading Euro-sceptic.

Labour and Conservative MPs were surprised to see one of the cabinet's leading Maastricht critics enjoying a meal in the Harcourt Room at the Commons with the man who resigned from Labour's shadow cabinet because of his backing for the treaty.

Disclosure of the meeting came on the day that Sir Norman Fowler condemned the "unholy alliance" between Labour, the Liberals and the Tory rebels.

Friends of Mr Portillo, the chief secretary to the Treasury, voiced astonishment last night that the lunch — witnessed by a Labour MP — should have caused any surprise.

They pointed out that Mr Gould used to be Mr Portillo's opposite number when he was at the environment department and that the two had kept in touch since. They added that Mr Portillo recently had lunch with Sir Edward Heath, the former prime minister and probably the strongest supporter of the European Community in the Commons.

It was, however, the third time in recent months that questions have been raised about Mr Portillo's engagements. He was criticised for attending a meeting of Euro-sceptic ministers after the

Danish referendum last June that concluded that the Maastricht treaty was dead. Only last month it was disclosed that both he and Peter Lilley, the social security secretary, and fellow critics had lunch with Baroness Thatcher and other sceptics while the prime minister was in Washington.

The lunchtime meeting with Mr Gould took place before the Thatcher encounter. *The Times* understands that Maastricht was one of the main topics of conversation.

The fact that the lunch was held openly in full view of any

MPs who cared to go into the Harcourt Room was cited as proof last night that there was no question of a plot.

But MPs were taken aback when they learnt of it last night. Some felt it raised questions over the judgment of Mr Portillo, who is a rising star of the right. Political rivals at the Commons often become friends but they rarely fraternise so openly precisely because of the embarrassment that might be caused. The view of MPs was that Mr Portillo should have known that the lunch, if disclosed, would produce headlines unhelpful to the government.

The lunch will undoubtedly be used to back the claims of "Euro-rebels" that they have backers at the highest levels of the government.

مركز الأبحاث

Soldiers accused of lying after Belfast joyrider shootings

By EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

PARACHUTE Regiment soldiers made up a story to justify the shooting of two joyriders who died in a hail of bullets on the outskirts of West Belfast, a court was told yesterday.

A leg injury was inflicted on Private Barry Aindow by other soldiers to bolster their story that he had been hit by the joyriders' car, it was claimed at Belfast Crown Court.

On the opening day of the trial, the prosecution said that the six members of the Third Battalion, The Parachute Regiment charged in connection with the deaths of Martin Peake, 17, and Karen Reilly, 18, were never in any danger in the incident.

Reg Weir QC said the Crown would also show how the soldiers had attempted to mislead police into thinking the car had hit one of them. A police officer accompanying the patrol had seen one soldier inflicting a deliberate leg wound on another.

Mr Peake and Miss Reilly, both from West Belfast, were shot dead on the Upper Glen Road shortly before midnight on September 30, 1990. They had been travelling in a stolen Vauxhall Astra that failed to stop when flagged down by the 17-man patrol.

As the car sped by, the soldiers fired 36 shots, at least 19 of which hit the car. Mr Peake died instantly when he was hit in the head. Miss Reilly was hit twice in the back and died on the way to hospital. A second girl in the car survived with a minor arm

injury. Pte Lee Clegg, 22, is charged with the murder of Miss Reilly. He is also charged with Lance Corporal Stephen Boustead, 28, and Pte Barry Aindow, 23, with the attempted murder of Mr Peake.

All three, with Pte Andrew Tracey, 21, Corporal Robert Wood, 29, and Second Lieutenant Andrew Oliver, 24, are charged with attempting to pervert the course of justice and obstructing police investigations.

Pte Aindow is also charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice by falsely claiming the car was deliberately driven at him in a way that it had hit him on the leg.

The soldiers, who have been in military custody since the shooting and are now based in Germany, deny all the charges. Those who opened fire admit doing so but claim their actions were justified because the car presented a danger to their lives. They sat impassively in court dressed in suits.

Mr Weir told Mr Justice Campbell, sitting without a jury, that the most important element in his account was the deliberate wounding of one of the soldiers, which had been observed by a police constable who was accompanying the patrol and by a man living in a caravan near the scene.

Mr Weir said the policeman heard a shout shortly after the shooting and turned round to see a soldier crouching "and

another soldier appeared to stamp or kick him in the leg". The man in the caravan would say he had seen one soldier hit the other one in the leg using a rifle butt.

Mr Weir said the six soldiers were part of a patrol specifically sent out to catch joyriders. Initially, they used two army vehicles to form a roadblock and checkpoint. The purpose of doing this was to catch some joyriders who were making a nuisance of themselves in a nearby housing estate and it was hoped if they came in this direction they would be stopped.

However, the roadblock was abandoned after one suspected joyrider in a Vauxhall Cavalier drove through without stopping. As the soldiers walked along the Upper Glen Road, a second car approached them, and some of the patrol opened fire, killing the two teenagers.

The deaths of Mr Peake and Miss Reilly caused a wave of anger in West Belfast amid claims by nationalists and republican politicians that the teenagers had been gunned down in cold blood.

The deaths were described as tragic by Charles Haughey, the then prime minister of the Irish Republic. Conservative politicians in Britain sprang to the defence of the soldiers, saying that it had not been for the threat of the IRA, the shooting would never have happened.

The trial is expected to last several weeks.

Wanted: £60,000 for outlaw's killer



Lethal weapon: the gun that shot James, front left

THE gun that killed Jesse James, America's first public enemy number one, is to go on sale in Sussex next month.

The gleaming .44 Smith & Wesson No. 3 New Model Revolver is being entered for auction by an anonymous American seller and is expected to raise up to £60,000 (Alison Roberts writes).

It belonged to Bob Ford, the young gunslinger who put a bullet in 35-year-old James's head on April 3, 1882, at St Joseph, Missouri, and has been verified as genuine.

Roy Butler, owner of the auction house Wallis and Wallis in Lewes, has become an expert on the story of the outlaw's death and the gun

used to kill him. Ford, apparently a friend of James but in the pay of a Commissioner Craig, was eating breakfast at the gang leader's house. According to Mr Butler, he tricked his host into turning his back to dust a picture.

James heard the click as Ford cocked the single action gun. "He turned around and was hit through the left eye, not in the back as some stories have it."

Mr Butler hopes that the gun, serial number 3766, will be returned to Clay County, Missouri, where the outlaw was born, and put in the museum there. "It is a piece of American history that ought to be on show," he said.



NatWest error puts customers quids in

By IAN MURRAY

THOUSANDS of NatWest Visa card holders have been credited with payments made by other customers due to a human error in the customer services department. The bank said most of the accounts had been corrected but a small number of errors were outstanding.

The mistake came to light when some card holders received their January account and noticed that payments they had made had not been credited to their account. Others noticed that they had been given a credit by the bank and queried the figures. The bank investigated and found that the wrong instructions had been fed into the computer, resulting in payments being directed from one customer to another. "A very large proportion of those involved have now been in touch with us and the matter has been sorted out," NatWest said. "We are repaying any interest charged due to credits not being made to accounts."

Barclays Bank has been ordered to pay out on a stolen forged cheque backed by credit card in a Court of Appeal ruling yesterday.

In a 2-1 majority ruling, the court held that the bank was liable to honour a £49.99 cheque with a forged signature when apparently the same signature appeared on the card. Barclays was given leave to take the case to the House of Lords.

Bauwens ends libel case over holiday

By IAN MURRAY

THE High Court libel case that finally led David Mellor to resign from the cabinet ended yesterday with a simple statement of satisfaction by The People newspaper.

Mona Bauwens, 31, who said over an article that called her father "top paymaster" of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and said he was "a supporter of the Iraqi tyrant Saddam Hussein", agreed that a court statement was sufficient for her to stop the legal proceedings.

She was offered no damages or apology and will have to pay her own legal costs, estimated at around £250,000. Mirror Group Newspapers, the defendant, will pay its own share of the costs, which are considerably lower because the case was handled by the group's own legal department.

Martin Cruddace, solicitor for the paper's former editor

Richard Stott, and for MGN, publishers of The People, said in court that they had no intention to criticise Mrs Bauwens.

The article, printed in September 1990, had simply revealed that Mr Mellor, then a cabinet minister, had been in Spain with the daughter of a prominent official of the organisation at the time of the Gulf crisis. The statement said the newspaper took the view that the matter was one of public interest.

The statement added that although Mrs Bauwens clearly believed readers might have felt the article implied she should be ostracised, "the defendants regret if any did so". Last September, a jury was divided 6-6 on whether there had been a libel.

After hearing the statement, she said: "I am glad it is all over — that is all I can say. It is a relief, a big relief."



Relieved: Mona Bauwens leaves court yesterday

Jurors told of couple in car blaze

By A STAFF REPORTER

POLICE called to a burning car at a busy spot found two soot-covered figures who had been the victims of a cold and horrific attempt to kill them, a court was told yesterday.

A severely burnt man had ropes and horse reins tied around him while his companion had her clothes partly burnt off. She was recognised as a woman only when she collapsed into a policeman's arms.

Police had been alerted to the burning car on a steep escarpment at the Barrow Wake beauty spot at Crickley Hill near Cheltenham, on the night of November 15, 1991. Alan Jenkins, for the prosecution, told Bristol Crown Court.

The victims were Ivor Stokle, 34, and his lover Pauline Leyshon, 43. Mr Jenkins said that Sheila Stroud, 32, her lover Mark Evans, 31, and unemployed Norman White were involved in the murder attempt in which the motive was money.

He said Ms Stroud was under pressure to pay £20,000 in a property settlement to Mr Stokle, her former business partner with whom she had lived for several years. Mr Jenkins said there were joint insurance policies which on the death of one of them would pay off more than £108,000 of mortgage, and there was an additional £30,000 from Mr Stokle's employers on his death.

Ms Stroud and Mr Evans, of Staunton, Gloucestershire, and Mr White, of Gloucester, have pleaded not guilty to joint charges of attempting to murder Mr Stokle and Mrs Leyshon.

Police, who arrived at the scene of the burning car shortly after midnight, heard moans and a soot-covered man, his clothes smoking, staggered towards them. He was pleading for help and saying that his girl friend had been murdered. The injured couple were treated in hospital until January 16, 1992.

The trial continues today.

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In a business class of its own

Banana spider bites shopper

By JAMES LANDALE

AN arachnophobic woman has been poisoned by the venom of a spider which bit her in a supermarket while she was picking up a bunch of bananas. Diana Adams, who has long had a fear of spiders, said yesterday: "It was my worst nightmare come true."

Mrs Adams, 44, of Cheney Manor, Wiltshire, saw the spider on her left wrist as she reached for the bananas in a Tesco store in Swindon at the weekend.

"I grabbed a bunch and felt something on me," she

said. "I looked down and saw this strange-looking spider and froze." The spider, as yet unidentified, was light brown, and the size of a fingernail, with thin legs.

She brushed the creature off and started screaming. "I expected a member of staff standing near by with a mop to kill it, but it disappeared back into the fruit."

It was only two hours later that she realised she had been bitten. She was taken to the Princess Margaret hospital in Swindon and was given antibiotics to combat the venom. "I felt really ill. All my glands are swollen

and my neck really aches," she said.

Mrs Adams, who has five children, said she feared that children might be bitten but that parents might not link the symptoms to a spider bite. She was so concerned that she put an advertisement in her local paper on Monday to warn other parents of the danger.

A spokeswoman for Tesco said the company was very concerned for Mrs Adams and that a full investigation was under way. "All our bananas are regularly inspected and our checks are very stringent," she said.

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Bewildered Russians fall victim to EC fishing war

■ Falling fish prices and increasing imports were behind the storming of a Russian fish factory ship at Peterhead.

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

FISHERMEN who attacked a Russian factory ship on Monday took to the seas yesterday to avoid arrest and perhaps the shame. In spite of threats of further commando-style attacks, the usually bustling port of Peterhead was quiet.

Few locals wanted to talk about the incident, which some felt had sullied the reputation of the Scottish fishing industry. In the attack on Monday evening, about 50 fishermen stormed the Russian ship *Romb* and poured diesel fuel into holds. Cod worth about £250,000 was destroyed.

Anatoly Demidov, skipper of the Russian vessel, said: "It was terrifying for the men. We didn't know what would happen." The ship was under police guard last night while preparing to leave Peterhead, but it will return. "We just bring fish — politics is for others," one of the crew said. Most of the community

depends on fishing to make a living in this wind-battered port 27 miles north of Aberdeen. Discontent has been fuelled by falling fish prices and increasing imports. One local, who did not want to be named, said: "It is a great shame, but if you had seen all the fish that had to be thrown out after market yesterday you would understand what all this is about. Something has got to be done to stop all those imports flooding out market."

The angry Scots also point out that French activists who recently staged violent protests about cheap imports have been rewarded with subsidies from the European Community.

The handful of fishermen on the quayside yesterday all said they had been at sea when the incident happened, but few condemned it. "It's been coming for a long time," said James McPherson, skipper of the *Ardent*. "I'd like to



Unsafe harbour: a policeman guards the Russian boat *Romb*. Its captain, Anatoly Demidov, right, will return to Peterhead despite the attack by Scots fishermen



see a ban on imports, or at least an increase in the levy on imports. Prices are below what they were 20 years ago. Fish prices are averaging £25 to £30 a box. We need to get

£40 a box just to break even." Another fisherman, who refused to be named, said he was willing to do the same thing every night of the week if necessary to get action. But

Philip Greig, managing director of Abacus, the company in nearby Mithras that was due to buy the Russian cargo, said: "This has just been a copycat attack of the French

action of the past few weeks. There is no justification for it." Sandy Law, chairman of the Scottish Fish Merchants' Association, called for the

police to charge the perpetrators. "We can no longer criticise the French for their behaviour because we are no better than them." Grampian police said yes-

terday that they were investigating the incident and appealing for witnesses.

Fish war, page 1
Leading article, page 19

Teaching union votes to boycott curriculum tests

By John O'Leary, Education Correspondent

STATE schools face severe disruption after a ballot by the second biggest teaching union yesterday showed overwhelming support for a boycott of all this year's national curriculum tests.

Almost 60,000 members of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers backed their executive's proposal to withdraw from all national assessment and testing in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In a turnout of more than half the eligible members, 88 per cent supported industrial action short of a strike.

Teachers' dissatisfaction with the government's assessment policies has focused on new English tests for 14-year-olds, which all six teaching unions have opposed. The National Union of Teachers is to ballot its members in May on an English boycott, but the NASUWT's vote is bound to increase the pressure for wider action affecting seven, 11 and 14-year-olds.

Head teachers were resigned yesterday to a summer of testing chaos, particularly in secondary schools, where almost a third of teachers are NASUWT members.

The NASUWT executive is likely to issue an instruction on Friday to start the boycott before Easter. Teachers will be asked to complete any items of assessment already started, but not to attempt any more. The tests, due to take place in June, will not be administered by the association's members.

Nigel de Gruchy, the gener-

al secretary, denied that the action was militant, and claimed that pupils' education would be improved because of the extra time released for teaching. "The members' verdict is a damning indictment of the government's policies on testing and assessment."

Mr de Gruchy said that teachers now had to complete thousands of individual assessments, and he added: "No one should forget that the national curriculum and its system of assessment and testing is not even half-implemented. What it would be like fully implemented hardly bears thinking about."

The NASUWT supports the principle of a national curriculum, but opposes the government's hopelessly over-prescriptive model. "Somebody, somewhere, has to call a halt to the government's testing and assessment juggernaut."

Baroness Blatch, the education minister, said the decision belonged to the dark ages of education. "All these arguments were used at the time of the first tests for seven-year-olds. Thanks to the commitment and hard work of teachers, those tests are now an established part of the national curriculum and are helping to raise standards."

Ann Taylor, Labour's education spokeswoman, said the result followed a series of individual protests, which should convince the government that something was very wrong in education. "This government is making guinea pigs of our children and nervous wrecks of our teachers. Ministers should condemn a little less and understand a little more."

Lady Blatch put the onus on head teachers to ensure that the tests were completed but both heads' associations will advise their members to stay out of the conflict. David Hart, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said there was no question of bringing in non-union staff, and some schools would have to consider cancelling this year's assessment and testing.



De Gruchy: denied the action was militant

Tobacco firm denies luring Third World

By Nicholas Watt

TOBACCO companies are luring millions of young people in developing countries into smoking to compensate for falling domestic sales, a report says today. It claims that sophisticated marketing plans have been deployed in countries ill-equipped to teach about the dangers of smoking.

The magazine *Readers Digest* investigated the tobacco industry in 20 countries on four continents and found that companies specifically aimed at youngsters by using glamorous images of America.

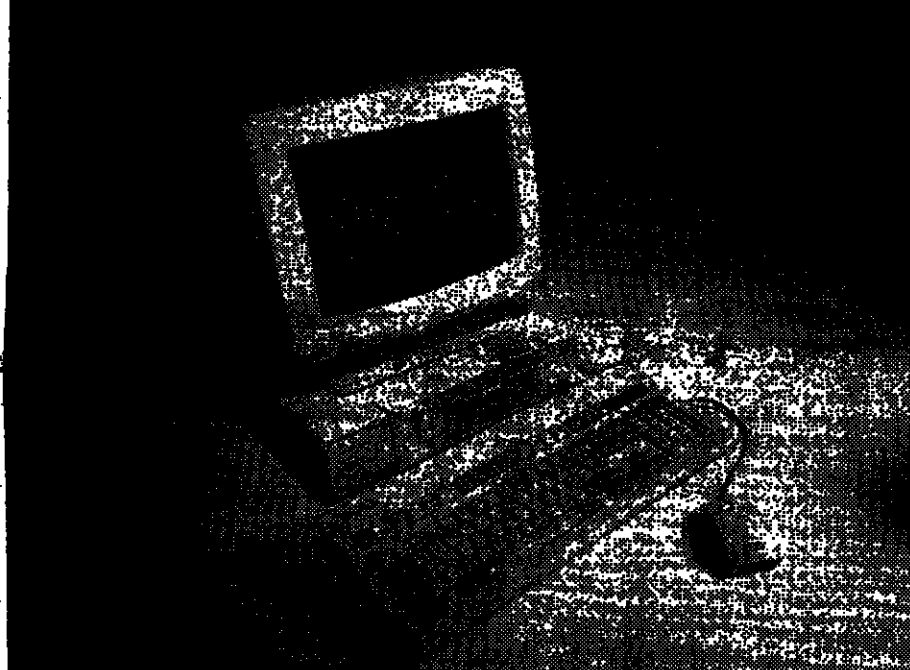
While domestic sales are falling, smoking rates in developing countries are climbing by more than 2 per cent a year with a dramatic increase among youngsters. In some Latin

American cities, 50 per cent of teenagers smoke.

Mike Pavitt, public affairs manager of Rothmans, said last night: "We don't want to convert people to smoking. We aim to convert existing smokers to our brands. From studies, we know that advertising is the last thing that influences young people. Peer group pressure and parental example are much more important."

Many governments are reluctant to campaign against smoking because they receive millions in tobacco taxes. The World Health Organisation says that 200 million children will eventually die from smoking and 10 per cent of the world's population will be killed by tobacco.

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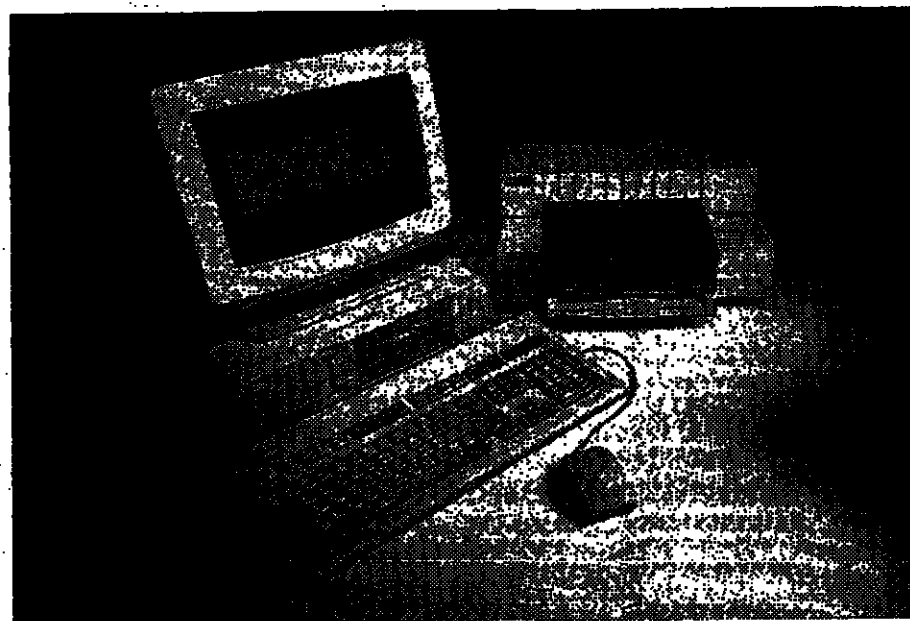
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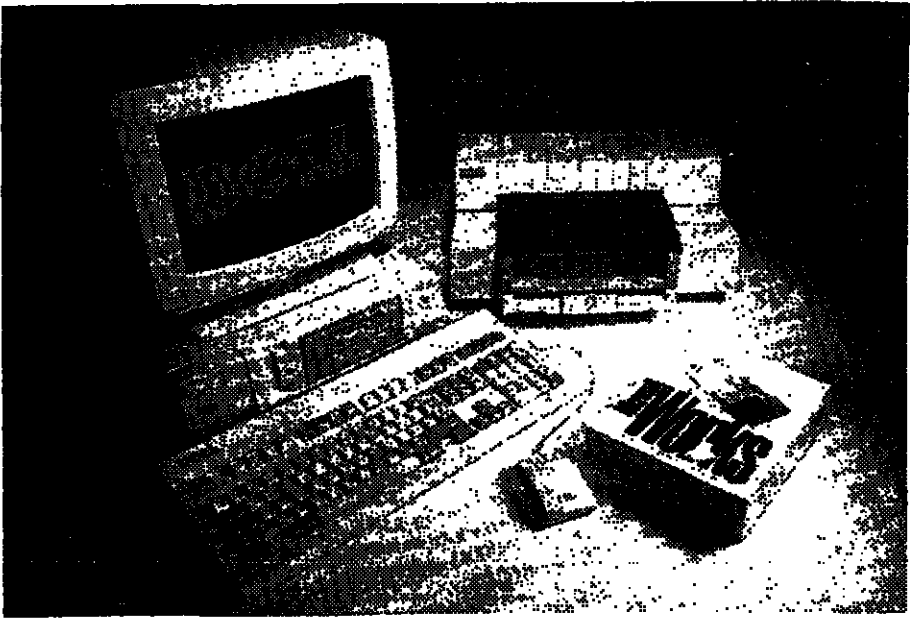
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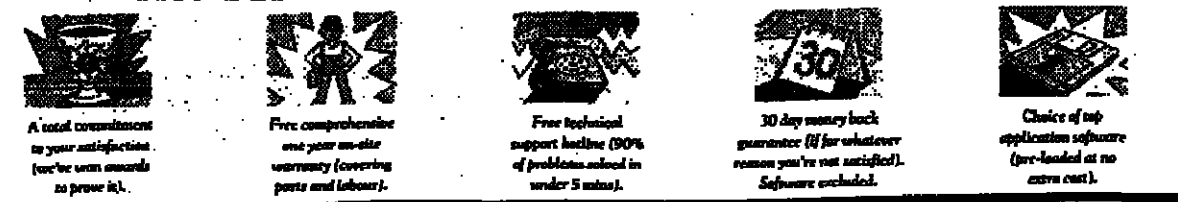
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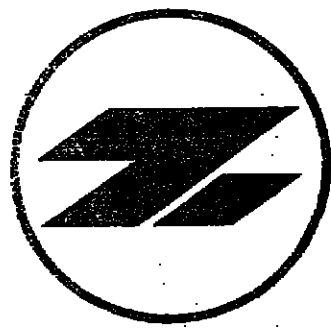
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Celebrities give desert island life a perfect image



AN INTIMATE café scene by Brassai and Bert Hardy's shot of his son playing soccer with a toy panda are among photographs chosen by celebrities heading for an imaginary desert island. The



Photographers' Gallery in the London Docklands came up with the idea of the visual equivalent of *Desert Island Discs* and asked figures in public and artistic life what they would most like to gaze at

once they tired of the lapping waves and rolling sand (Alison Roberts writes). The 1932 Brassai photograph was the choice of Phillip Kozloff, vice-president of Citibank, while the goalmouth panda was one

of the collective choices of Arsenal Football Club. The show is an esoteric mix that features both famous and obscure images and is rather like a competition in good taste. Lord Healey

has picked a rugged Yorkshire landscape, and the designer Terence Conran a photo of Matisse. Janet Street-Porter, head of youth programmes at the BBC, has chosen two shots of her boy friend.

Hatton jury warned by lawyer

THE jury in the Derek Hatton fraud trial was yesterday urged by counsel for his defence to decide the case on the evidence, not on any previous knowledge of the former deputy leader of Liverpool City Council.

Rodney Klevan QC told Mold Crown Court, Clwyd, in his closing speech that "half the Amazon forest" had gone into preparation for the case but that it rested on evidence from Mr Hatton's diary.

Mr Klevan said: "He is not on trial for anything political. It has nothing whatever to do with this case. I hope there is no political witch-hunt here camouflaged by all this paper."

On trial with Mr Hatton are John Nelson and Hannah Folan, former Labour councillors, and John Monk, a businessman. Mr Hatton, Mrs Folan and Mr Monk deny conspiring to defraud Liverpool council by arranging for Mr Monk to be leased land at Brownlow Hill for less than its market value.

Mr Hatton, Mr Monk and Mr Nelson deny a similar charge in relation to land at Manesty's Lane.

The jury is expected to retire tomorrow.

Police chief faces trial after wrongful murder convictions

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THREE South Wales police officers including a chief inspector are to be prosecuted for conspiracy to pervert the course of justice over their conduct during the case in which two brothers were wrongfully convicted of the murder of a sex shop manageress.

Barbara Mills QC, the Director of Public Prosecutions, decided to bring criminal proceedings against the officers after an enquiry by Devon and Cornwall police into the murder investigation.

The Crown Prosecution Service said yesterday that it had asked South Wales police to seek summonses against Chief Insp Alan Thomas, Insp Jeffrey Jones and Constable Michael Collins.

The three officers face the court action after the release eight months ago by the Court of Appeal of Wayne and Paul Darvell, who had been jailed for life for the murder of Sandra Phillips, a sex shop manageress from Swansea. The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gosforth, said in his judgment that the judge and jury at the original trial at Swansea in 1986 had been "seriously misled".

Papers about the murder investigation and nine other cases were submitted to the

CPS between March 1992 and February 1993. There were files on a total of 25 serving or former officers.

The enquiry by Devon and Cornwall police was widened to include "discrepancies" in the pocket books and diaries of other officers not involved in the murder enquiry. A CPS spokesman said: "After careful consideration, and with the advice of two experienced counsel, the CPS has decided that with regard to the other 22 officers there is insufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction for any criminal offence."

The case of Wayne and Paul Darvell was described as "thoroughly disquieting" by Lord Taylor. "When he quashed their 1986 convictions, the Lord Chief Justice expressed 'deep regret' for the ordeal they had suffered.

Mrs Phillips was found strangled and battered to death at her sex shop on June 14, 1985. The Darvell brothers, unemployed and homeless, were arrested shortly afterwards.

They were convicted by a majority verdict of Mrs Phillips's murder after a 32-day trial. The judge recommended that Wayne serve a minimum of 15 years and Paul a minimum of 20 years.

Tell John Major what you think about Britain today

BRITAIN — WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT'S RIGHT? WHAT'S NEXT? This is the subject of the current Channel 4 series *Opinions*. The series will end with a televised public forum, held in association with *The Times*, at Central Hall, Westminster, on Wednesday March 24, starting at 7.30pm. The meeting will be broadcast on Channel 4 on Sunday March 28, the eve of John Major's 50th birthday.

Speakers will include Alan Clark, the historian, former Defence Minister and first contributor to the series. Other participants will include the radical lawyer Michael Mansfield QC, Sheila McKechnie of Shelter, Michael Winner, the film director, and Professor Paul Kennedy, the author of *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century*.

If you would like to attend, please phone the 24-hour credit card hotline 071-344 4444, or complete and return the coupon below with your remittance. Tickets cost £10 (concessions £5) plus £1 postage.

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President of the Swimathon, is very proud that it's now become the largest charity sport event in the UK. Let's hope next year you can make it even bigger and get all the way round to his chin.

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'We are powerless to act as we have no right of entry'

Fire officers condemn Crown immunity

By TONY DAWES

BRITAIN'S fire chiefs will today tell MPs that the immunity of Crown buildings from fire regulations must be reviewed "as a matter of urgency".

They say that thousands of workers and residents in Crown properties, including government offices and royal buildings, are exposed to a "high risk". In a submission to the Commons public accounts committee, which today reviews fire prevention in England and Wales, the officers say they cannot accept that there are any justifiable reasons for compromising the safety of people.

The MPs will consider a damning report on fire safety by the National Audit Office, which found "important gaps in fire prevention coverage of Crown premises". The audit office also reported that the Home Office department responsible for inspecting Crown property was undermanned and under-funded.

Sir Clive Whitmore, permanent secretary at the Home Office, and Sir Reginald Doyle, HM chief inspector of fire services, have been called before the hearing.

In its submission, the Chief and Deputy Chief Fire Officers' Association says: "Even with an improved inspection frequency, the absence of any enforcement due to Crown immunity makes control of Crown premises impractical and unlikely. It is likely that some premises presenting high risk to occupants do exist without any statutory controls due to Crown immunity."

Terry Glossop, chief officer of Gwent and chairman of the association's fire prevention committee, told *The Times*: "All employees should enjoy the same degree of protection, wherever they work. If government departments fail to achieve that, we are powerless

to act as we have no right of entry or powers of enforcement in Crown properties."

The fire chiefs say that self-regulation of fire standards by the Crown does not work. They cite the example of health service buildings, which lost Crown immunity in 1990. Brigades found that many hospitals had been waiting years for inspections and fire safety certificates.

Glyn Evans, a member of the executive of the Fire Brigades Union, said: "We have agitated for years for the points made by the audit office. Our members are expected to fight fires in Crown properties but have no powers to check that the buildings contain adequate fire precautions."

The Home Office insists there is little evidence that the lack of statutory controls has impaired the safety of Crown buildings. It also says that it is clearing the backlog of inspections of Crown properties and that its team of inspectors is nearly up to strength.

Crown properties are not exempt from fire regulations, but because of immunity cannot be prosecuted for failing to adopt them. Most have applied for fire certificates, but some 40 per cent are still waiting to receive them.

A Home Office spokesman said: "We set targets for the Crown premises inspection group to inspect all premises for which an application for a fire certificate had been received by the end of 1994. The Home Office is confident that those targets will be met."

Among the Crown properties that enjoy immunity are Buckingham Palace, Hampton Court Palace, the Tower of London, Windsor Castle and leading government offices including the Treasury, the Foreign Office and the Cabinet Office.



Never immune to danger: searching for clues at Hampton Court Palace after the fire on March 31, 1986

Alarm bells ring at tinderbox Palace of Westminster

MPs WILL meet to discuss fire safety today in a building that does not have a fire certificate, even though it was described as a "tinderbox" 14 years ago (Tony Dawes writes).

The Palace of Westminster is singled out for attack in the National Audit Office report on fire prevention, which comes before the Commons public accounts committee today. The report says that a list of improvements was agreed after the criticism in 1979, but that nine years later much of the work remained to be done. Faster progress has been

made since 1988, but it will still be October next year before the work needed to obtain a fire certificate is completed. Nothing could have been done to force the palace managers to act more quickly because the building is Crown property and, as such, immune from the law.

Alan Williams, a former Labour minister and a member of the committee, said: "It is wrong that Parliament passes laws on health and safety which are mandatory for everyone else and then excludes itself from them. If any major employer behaved in this way, MPs would be going through the roof, yet many are happily carrying on in ignorance of the way we ignore our own rules."

Safety experts regard the Parliament building as a serious fire risk because it contains many of the factors that led to November's fire at Windsor Castle spreading so quickly: wooden furniture and panelling, behind which lurk hidden voids through which fire can travel rapidly.

The *Times* has also discovered that the building contains 300 cooking appliances, in addition to the kitchen equipment. These include gas stoves and microwave ovens taken in by members and their staff.

Fire officers have seen fire exits blocked by mounds of paper and have criticised the way some corridors have been divided into rows of small offices. There are now 1,000 rooms and two miles of corridor: 9,000 people hold passes for the building and hundreds, sometimes thousands, of visitors pass through every weekday.

Sir Alan Urwick, the Commons

Sergeant at Arms, said that long corridors were being fitted with fire-resisting doors and fire barriers were being created in the basement and roof voids. He said priority has been given to improving unsatisfactory escape routes and £500,000 would be spent in the next financial year on fire safety measures.

These will include emergency lighting on escape routes, an automatic fire detection system and a modern control room where the operator will be able to track the development of any fire.

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Sir Alan Urwick, the Commons

Family and friends bid farewell to Tony Bland

By PAUL WILKINSON

TONY Bland, the 96th victim of the Hillsborough disaster, was finally laid to rest yesterday, four years after his life was effectively crushed from him in the Sheffield stadium.

In a simple but dignified funeral service at St James's parish church in his home town of Keighley, West Yorkshire, the family of the 22-year-old soccer fan was joined by players from Liverpool Football Club and hospital staff who looked after him as he lay unfeeling and unknowing in a persistent vegetative state.

Relatives of other soccer fans who died during the crowd surge at the beginning of Liverpool's cup semi-final were also present. It was exactly a week since Mr Bland died at Aldredale general hospital after the House of Lords ruling last month that feeding could be legally withdrawn.

Among the mourners were Liverpool's chief executive, Peter Robinson, and three players, Jan Molby, Alan Hansen and Ron Yates. Dr Jim Howe, who was in charge of Mr Bland's care at the hospital and made the final decision on when to remove the feeding tubes, gave a brief reading from Isaiah.

Stella Taylor, deaconess at St James's, said Mr Bland's death would leave a great gap. Members of the hospital nursing staff, particularly Dr Howe, had been devoted to their care of him. "Tony would be so thrilled that there are representatives here today from Liverpool Football Club, the team so close to his heart," she said.

Floral tributes included one from Liverpool's Kop and another from Gerry Marsden, the Merseyside pop star who recorded the Kop's anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone".

Inside the church at the head of the aisle flanking the plain oak coffin were two floral tributes, one from Mr Bland's 18-month-old nephew Daniel, who he had never seen, and the second in the shape of a football from his sister Angela and her husband Noel. The coffin was covered with a huge spray of flowers from Alan and Barbara Bland, his parents.

As the cortege left the church for a private cremation the church organ swelled with the strains of "You'll Never Walk Alone", an epitaph echoed on many of the scores of wreaths at the church.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Engineer leaves RNLI £2m

A retired engineer has left almost £2 million to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. David Kirkaldy, who had made substantial donations to the charity since the 1950s, left it all but £74,000 of an estate worth £2,057,424 net.

Mr Kirkaldy, who never married and died in a nursing home in Hove, East Sussex, last year, aged 82, ran a family firm that was a world leader in detecting metal fatigue.

He left £40,000 to family and personal legacies, and his collection of models and a £14,000 loan to the British Engineering Trust.

Dry dock

Half the Old Bailey judges could retire if courts dealt with only sober defendants. Judge Petre said yesterday as he remanded a man for reports after being told his post office hold-up was probably drugs or drink related.

Actor's libel win

Albert Finney accepted substantial undisclosed libel damages yesterday over an article in *The Independent* that incorrectly singled him out as the cause of a West End play coming off.

Baby assaulted

A bogus social worker tricked her way into a house in Southwick, Tyne and Wear, and assaulted an eight-month-old boy. She was 5ft 2in, with sandy hair and a limp.

The way it isn't

CHARGE DOWN



THESE days, there's no telling what will make a headline. "FUGGIE DIE STER ATE MY HAM-STER" is the most widely quoted of trivial headlines, but it possessed a bumpy poetry that placed it in the rich tradition of English nonsense.

Last week, a headline in the *Daily Mirror* went: "BANK MANAGER CHARGED £72 FOR 10 MINUTE CHAT". This was such a dull story that I felt I could better it once a week, simply taking events from my own fairly pedestrian life in Essex.

"TECHNICIAN MENDS VIDEO, THEN WRECKS OWN WORK" occurred the other day. My little son had slotted a piece of jigsaw into our video recorder, thus jamming it. A technician came out, found out what the problem was and spent half an hour putting it right.

At this point, I discovered that my wife had taken the cheque-book, and I had no cash. I explained the situation and asked the technician if he could leave the bill with me.

He said no, he could not. He then began to dismantle his own work and, saying it was company policy, left us with a video freshly jammed.

"BABY-SITTER SCOFFS £65 MEAL". Staying in a hotel in Paris, we hired a baby-sitter to look after our son. She arrived late, saying she had not found time to eat. I told her to order a snack from room service. Two hours later, we returned, I paid her, and she departed. I then noticed a trolley in the corner bearing assorted plates and dishes and no fewer than three silver salvers. When I came to pay the next morning, an extra £65 was on our bill. If only she had known, the baby-sitter might also have picked up an extra £500 by giving her exclusive to the *Daily Mirror*.

Americans reveal bedroom secrets

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

A SECOND sexual revolution is occurring in the bedrooms of America—and in the living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens, too, according to a survey claiming to be the first in depth report on US sexual mores since Kinsey almost half a century ago.

Americans are developing an increasing interest in "marginal sex" ranging from sado-masochism to cross-dressing and group sex as they search for novel ways of expressing their sexual drive, the survey's authors claim. Sex is no longer confined to the bedroom and sexual practices that were until recently considered deviant are becoming accepted as mainstream.

The findings, based on a questionnaire survey of 2,700 people backed up with 125 interviews, suggest that almost one in seven men and more than one in ten women have experience of sado-masochism and an even higher proportion believe that "pain and pleasure really go together in sex".

Group sex is "a temptation for many Americans", the survey's authors claim, with 14 per cent of men and 8 per cent of women saying they have tried it. Men usually raise the idea and most wives

initially have to be urged, cajoled or bribed. Later, however, they become "slowly but definitely the more ardent champions of the practice". The authors suggest that its initial appeal to women may lie in the opportunity it provides for physical contact with other women.

The survey, by American sexologist Samuel Janus and his wife Cynthia, a gynaecologist, lacks the scientific rigour of a British Wellcome Foundation survey whose first results were published last autumn, but contains a wealth of impressionistic details that make it more entertaining.

The authors conclude that Aids has had little effect on the sexual appetite of most Americans and that sexual sophistication "demands" an increasing repertoire of unusual sexual acts that are personally experienced as well as the knowledge of others still to be tried. Variety is constantly desired to enrich the sexual experience.

The Janus Report on Sexual Behaviour. Published on March 25 by John Wiley & Sons, Baffins Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1UD; £16.95

BBC tones down Chatterley's lover for the adult audience

By ALEXANDRA FRIAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE BBC is to screen a toned-down version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the erotic novel by D.H. Lawrence. Directed by Ken Russell and starring Joely Richardson, the production is to be shown in June as part of BBC television's £180 million spring and summer schedule.

Alan Yentob, launching his first television schedule since taking over as controller of BBC1, described the series as "quite proper" but said that it would not be broadcast before the 9pm evening watershed that divides family and adult viewing. "You cannot put this book 'wholesale' on television; there are things you have to leave out," he said.

Addressing an issue of increasing public concern, the amount of violence and sex on television, Mr Yentob said that the schedule contained the same proportions of these elements "as in our own lives. There is nothing in any of our programmes to give serious cause for concern. Anyone who runs a TV service who does not think of these things is shirking his responsibility. There is crime on the streets and we will reflect that."

Ms Richardson, 27, daughter of Vanessa Redgrave,



Screen affair: Sean Bean and Joely Richardson

plays the title role in *Lady Chatterley*, Russell's adaptation of Lawrence's book. Sean Bean, who played a calculating womaniser in the television bodice-ripper *Clarissa* last year and who is also the star of the heavyweight costume drama heading ITV's spring schedule, *Sharpe*, plays Mellors.

The new schedule includes a new five-part detective series starring Patrick Malahide, who made his name as Arthur Daley's police enemy in *Minder*, as the 1940s hero *Inspector Alleyn*, on BBC1.

In August, BBC2 will devote an entire day's programming to 1960s television in *One Day In The Sixties*.

Programmes bought from

abroad include an American mini-series with a difference, *Lonesome Dove*. Described by American critics as "the best western ever made", the four-part series based on the book by Larry McMurtry stars Robert Duval, Tommy Lee Jones and Angelica Huston.

On BBC2 in May, *Sylvania Waters*, a fly-on-the-wall documentary series, follows the lives of a well-off, loud-mouthed Australian family. Shown in Australia last year, the series became a national talking-point with some commentators criticising it for depicting Australians as crass, materialistic and bigoted, while others praised it as a social insight.

Television, page 43.

Nearly 2m trapped by negative equity

By RACHEL KELLY, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

NEARLY two million households are caught in homes worth less than their mortgage, according to the Bank of England. The figure is a sharp increase from the Bank's estimate last autumn of 1.2 million households, and will add to pressure for the Treasury to provide measures to relieve the housing market in the Budget next week.

The increase is a result of a 4.3 per cent drop in house prices during the last quarter of 1992, according to Halifax building society's house price index.

The Bank of England's latest figures show that 1.7 million households had negative equity — house value lower than mortgage — in the final quarter of last year. But the figure will have risen since then with further falls in house prices of 0.3 per cent in both January and February.

The Bank calculates that the average gap between the value of the home and the value of the mortgage is £6,600. The total amount of negative equity is £11.2 billion. Again, both figures will now be higher because of the further house-price falls.

John Wriglesworth, housing analyst at UBS Phillips & Drew, said the figures were

worrying and could be even worse. "I fear that the numbers could actually be over two million. That means that about one in three households with mortgages in the South East now have negative equity."

"Their castles have become their prisons. They can't move. A large section of the housing market had been rendered immobile. This is serious not just for the people trapped in their houses, but also for those who are considering buying."

A report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation last year warned that consumer spending would not pick up until people were sure of the level of capital they had in their houses.

Dr Wriglesworth said, however, that the number of households with negative equity may have reached a peak. "I do not think the problem will get much worse. Prices may fall again a little, but I think they will pick up. Owners should not despair as the market is beginning to turn."

The householders most affected by negative equity were first-time buyers. Dr Wriglesworth said. They rushed into buying to beat the abolition of multiple mortgage tax relief in the summer of 1988, when prices were at their peak.

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Lang defends the Union in reforms for Scotland

BY JONATHAN PRYNN

■ The sovereignty of Parliament will remain intact in the government's constitutional plans for Scotland

THE government has unveiled its "taking stock" review of Scotland's role within the United Kingdom, while launching a robust defence of the 286-year-old union with England. A package of 50 proposals, aimed at increasing the scrutiny powers of Scottish MPs and boosting the role and visibility of the Scottish Office, is contained in a white paper, *Scotland in the Union: A Partnership For Good*, published by the government yesterday.

The 11-month examination of Scottish constitutional issues was prompted by the prime minister during the general election campaign last April. It was an attempt to counter Labour and nationalist claims that the Conservative party had no mandate to govern north of the border, where it has only a quarter of the popular vote. The Tories are the only major party in Scotland to reject any form of devolution or home rule.

In a foreword to the 50-page white paper John Major said it was the government's duty to address Scottish anxieties that "the union is in some way less relevant to Scotland and her aspirations".

The white paper is believed to be the first major reappraisal of the relationship between

the two countries since the signing of the treaty that bound them together in 1707.

The proposals predictably found little support on the opposition benches, where they were rejected as "sheer tokenism" by Tom Clarke, the Labour frontbench spokesman, and as a "constitutional charade" by Alex Salmond, the leader of the Scottish National Party. However, the opposition parties reserved some of their most withering fire for each other after Monday night's vote on the committee of the regions, in which the three nationalist MPs supported the government.

Earlier Mr Lang had told MPs that the initiatives would lead to "a significant improvement in the handling of parliamentary business relating to Scotland, in a way which is less remote, is more responsive to Scottish priorities and concerns".

The Scottish Grand Committee of all Scottish MPs is to be given more time for debate and additional powers to question Scottish Office ministers

including, for the first time, the opportunity to question Scottish Office ministers in the Lords and the Scottish law officer. The wider use of provisions allowing Scottish bills to be scrutinised by special standing committees is also proposed. Mr Lang said the changes did not threaten the ultimate, sovereignty of Parliament.

The Scottish Office gains a number of new responsibilities under the white paper, including the Scottish Arts Council, Highlands and Islands Airports and training policy in Scotland. The department is also to set up a wider network of branch offices throughout Scotland and will produce an annual report on its activities. A hot-line to a central enquiry unit will be established to increase government openness "in accordance with the principles of the Citizen's Charter," Mr Lang said. In addition, he said the Department of Trade and Industry was establishing a new office dealing with oil and gas in Aberdeen.

After the Edinburgh summit at the end of the British presidency of the EC in December, Mr Lang said he would be seeking to bring further big international meetings to the Scottish cities. He revealed that an EC small business conference would be held in Glasgow in December.

The proposals announced yesterday were not the end of the taking stock process and would be built on if they proved popular, Mr Lang said. It marked "the start of a renewed emphasis by the government on the importance to the United Kingdom of all its component parts," he said.

The government continued to "reject utterly the arguments of those who want Scotland to break away from the United Kingdom, either through the direct means of separation or by way of the slippery slope of a separate parliament."

The proposals were welcomed by English and Scottish Tory MPs but a number of English members complained about the over-representation of the Scottish electorate at Westminster. Sir Peter Emery, who represents Hounslow, said 100 extra English MPs would have to be created to restore the balance.

Lang, page 18



Fading flag: Ian Lang, who announced a package of reforms for Scotland which fell short of devolution and were denounced by Labour as "sheer tokenism".

AROUND THE LOBBY

Children's passport to safety

MPs are calling for the abolition of family passports to stem the growing number of tug-of-love child abductions, which from the United Kingdom alone have reached a total of 1,200 a year (Francis Gibb writes). Children should be issued with their own passports which would contain details of any court orders such as with whom they should live, the committee of MPs said yesterday.

Their report, drawn up with the support of Reunite, the National Council for Child Abduction, says that the number of children, now being abducted amounts to the equivalent of 40 nursery schools. Most are under the age of eight and some never see their parents again. "The harm which a child suffers as a result of an abduction cannot be underestimated," the report says.

New curbs challenged

Government proposals to curb illegal camping by gypsies and travellers are draconian and breach the European Convention on Human Rights, according to the civil rights group Liberty. The group said that it would challenge the Department of the Environment proposals in the European Court if they became law. A consultation paper from the department, published last August, would make it a criminal offence, rather than a civil one, to park a caravan without the landowner's permission and removes the duty on councils to provide sites.

DIY honours

Downing Street has already received 1,000 requests for do-it-yourself application forms on which to recommend people for honours, since the prime minister announced last Thursday his reforms of the honours system. Mr Major's plan is that everyone should have a stake in recommending honours recipients.

In Parliament

Commons (2.30): Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Motion to renew Prevention of Terrorism Act. Lords (2.30): Debate on food and drink industry.

Howe leads Conservative calls for tax rises in tough Budget

BY NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

FAILURE to raise taxes in the Budget will precipitate another financial crisis in the run-up to the next general election, Lord Howe of Aberavon warned Norman Lamont yesterday as he renewed his pleas for a tough fiscal package.

"The greatest service the Chancellor can perform for his country is to do what is right, not what is popular," said the former Chancellor, who raised taxes and cut interest rates in the depths of the last recession.

Lord Howe amplified his calls for substantial tax rises amid signs that a growing number of Conservative MPs are rallying behind the banner of modest increases to contain the ballooning public sector deficit.

in trimming universal benefits and tax breaks as is consistent with the recovery. Some of the savings should be ploughed into imaginative and forward-looking policies, such as nursery education, not just for educational reasons but for social ones.

The shape of next week's Budget is also intimately tied up with Mr Lamont's future as Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was being pointed out yesterday at Westminster that a no-debt Budget would hardly advance his hopes of hanging on to his job in a



Howe warned Lamont of long-term risks

go cycle, with the government forced to slam on the brakes to contain both inflation and borrowing as a matter of urgency.

The former Chancellor said that only sustained low inflation would offer a credible basis for growth. Sound public finances, backed up by a formal monetary framework, were the only way to hold down price rises permanently.

"The Chancellor does need to raise taxes in the forthcoming Budget. First, because we have to start curbing the fiscal deficit now. Second, because market confidence is so low that only action can give credibility to put public finances on a firmer footing."

Although the short-term outlook for growth was good, postponing tax rises risked a "fatal U-turn" just before the next general election as the government was forced to puncture an unsustainable boom.

Lord Howe called for phasing out the mortgage tax relief or the lower retirement age for women, or injecting more private money into infrastructure projects.

The Chancellor should look for new sources of revenue such as extending VAT at a new low rate to zero-rated items such as food, newspapers and domestic fuel, higher green taxes or raising employees' national insurance contributions.

At the same time, Mr Lamont should take quick action to curb lengthening queue queues.

Labour yesterday opposed the imposition of VAT on newspapers. Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, said that such a step would close 200 titles and would be a "betrayal" of the prime minister's pre-election pledge that he had no plans and no need to extend the scope of VAT.

Maxwell pension schemes protected

BY JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE £2.5 million emergency fund for Maxwell pensioners announced by Peter Lilley, the social security secretary, last June is expected to run out next month. However, pensioners are expected to have their payments protected for at least another year while the missing millions are being traced, the government announced yesterday.

The Maxwell Pensioners Trust, which was set up at the same time under Sir John Cuckney, has agreed to continue payments to pensioners by using some of the £6 million which has been given to the trust by City organisations and others.

The trust, dubbed the "guilt fund" at the time, as it was partly aimed at securing money from organisations that might have benefited from Robert Maxwell's transactions. However, trust managers argue that many City firms may have been put off giving money because it would have looked like an admission of guilt.

Mr Lilley and Sir John have in recent weeks emphasised the urgency of allocating the £150 million which is still in the Commons Investment Fund. Sir John has recently taken on a mediating role in trying to get liquidators, lawyers and administrators to agree on how this money should be distributed.

A statement from the trust said that funds would be made available to pension schemes on the same terms as have applied to the government's emergency funding.

The social security department made it clear last night that the government had consistently said that it had no obligation to compensate the pensioners.

Leasehold defeat averted

BY ROBERT MORGAN, POLITICAL STAFF

THE government last night survived a concerted attack from Conservative backbench peers over its plans to allow leaseholders of flats to buy their freeholds. Ministers were saved the embarrassment of two defeats in two days thanks to Labour and Liberal Democrat peers, as well as a sprinkling of cross-benchers, voting with them.

Tory peers, led by two former ministers, Lord Peyton of Yeovil and Lord Boardman, proposed that only flat owners who had lived in their flat for three years and for whom it was their main residence should be allowed to buy the freehold. After a lively two-hour debate, the amendment was rejected by 185 votes to 147, a majority for the government of 38.

Many landlords, including the Duke of Westminster, who was present to hear the debate, fear that the government's plans will lead to the break-up of their estates. Some claim that its provisions are confiscatory, a view reflected by some peers yesterday. The duke, who owns extensive properties in Mayfair and Belgravia, has withheld his donations to the Tory party because of the bill.

Lord Peyton said that the

measure gave benefits to tenants to the detriment of landlords. It made no reference to the deserts of one or the defects of the other. His proposals, he said, were in line with the promise in the Conservative party manifesto.

Lord Boardman said that compulsory purchase should only be allowed where there was a public interest. He said that contracts should only be breached by government if there was overwhelming public interest.

Lord Boardman was concerned about the purchase of leaseholds by investment companies and foreign-based companies. In the West End of London in the past ten years more than 50 per cent of transactions had been by foreign companies or foreign individuals. The bill, he said, represented a breach of promise implicit in the manifesto.

Lord Campbell of Alloway, another Tory peer, said that the bill was not part of traditional Conservative values. The amendments reflected manifesto commitment. It was never the intention to confer the right of enfranchisement on a person who had more than one home.

Labour and Liberal Democrat spokesmen supported the government's stand. Lord Williams of Elvel, Labour's environment spokesman, said the amendment would seriously reduce the prospects of collective enfranchisement and distort the market for leasehold flats.

Baroness Hamwee, for the Liberal Democrats, expressed concern about the reduction in the number qualifying for enfranchisement if the amendment were carried. It was in the public interest that more rather than less people should be enfranchised.

Leading article, page 19

However, Viscount Mountgarret, another Conservative, said that leaseholders signed contracts and they knew what they were signing. The bill, he said, "seems a little bit socialistic".

For the government, Lord Strathclyde pointed out that the bill, including the provisions they were debating, had gone through the Commons with all-party support. Because of the high turnover of residents in flats, it would be almost impossible for tenants to qualify to buy the freehold if all residents in a block had to be resident for three years.

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Think tank demands civil service shake-up

BY MICHAEL DYNES, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

WHITEHALL'S senior policy-making elite should be put on five-year contracts, paid the market rate for the job, and be judged by the quality of their performance, according to proposals by a new think tank.

Senior civil servants should be given specific areas of policy, and those responsible for serious errors of judgment should be removed from office, under wide-ranging proposals to overhaul the machinery of central government.

The proposals, which will be submitted to the Commons Treasury and Civil Service select committee today, have been drawn up by the European Policy Forum, a cross-party think tank founded

by Graham Mather, the former head of the Institute of Economic Affairs. While senior civil servants are rightly regarded as "non-voluntarily incorruptible", a series of policy errors — ranging from the failure of BCCI to the recent coal pit closure fiasco — have led to the widespread perception that government is no longer working effectively, Mr Mather said.

Opposition demands for ministerial resignations every time there is a policy error, fail to take account of the contribution made by senior officials to policy initiatives. "There is in practice a shared responsibility which is unrecognised by constitutional doctrine," Mr Mather said.

New structures were needed to ensure that ministers and their officials assumed responsibility for their actions,

Mr Mather said. The creation of policy directorates similar to the French cabinet system made up of departmental secretaries, junior ministers, civil servants and outside experts, would be a step in the right direction, he added.

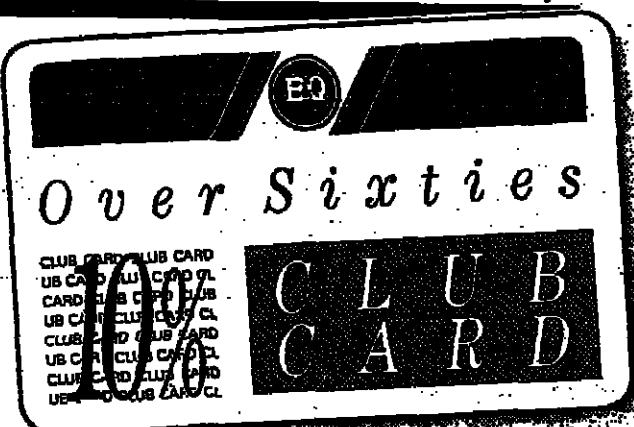
Accountability would only be effective "if senior officials are identified with defined policy areas and their departments and their responsibilities made explicit," Mr Mather said. Modernisation of the machinery of central government was all the more urgent given the changes which had taken place in local government and the service-providing agencies, he said.

Responsibility, Accountability and Standards in Government, European Policy Forum.

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At Thames Water, we've been busy finding ways of storing and saving water.

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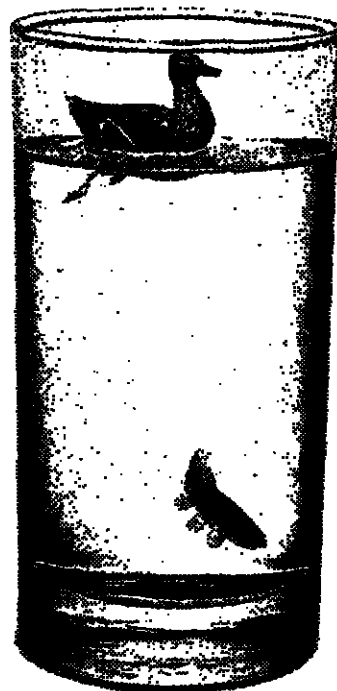
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The environment.

Since 1990, we've upgraded or rebuilt over 150 sewage works. As a result, the waste water that goes into our rivers is even cleaner.

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Drinking water quality?



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Our customers receive the cheapest combined water and sewage bill in England and Wales. We mean to keep it that way.

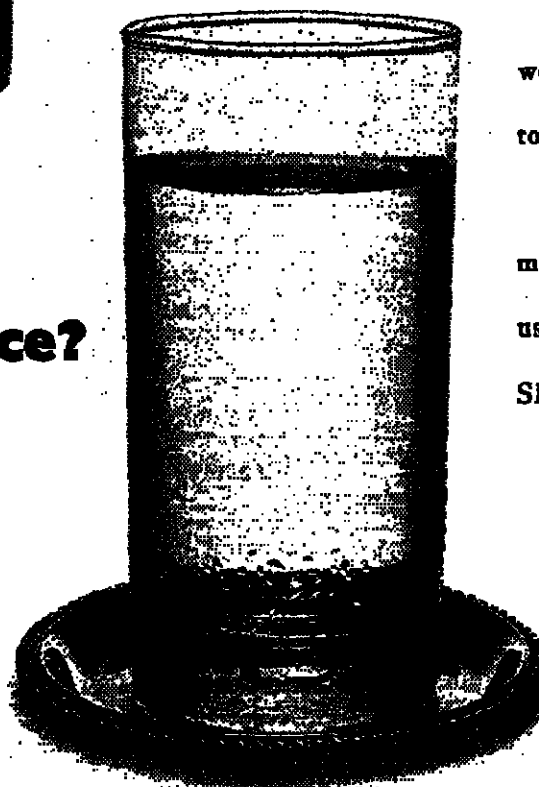
We plan to do more in all of the areas we've mentioned - to give a better service not just to you, but to your children, and their children.

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هنا نحن الاصل

Glimpses of a new dawn lighten the corruption gloom in Italy



Craxi: his Socialist party headed for ruin

By ARRIGO LEVI

AN EARTHQUAKE is shaking the foundations of the Italian system. Are we Italians witnessing the decline and fall of our democracy—or is the crisis now sweeping away men and institutions of our first republic a new dawn in the history of our country?

The dominant mood in Italy today is one of gloom. Revelations about the widespread corruption are a never-ending shock. When the judges have completed their work, few of the men who ruled Italy in the past will still be around. Some of them may end up in jail; many will no longer be allowed to run for public office.

Some of the old political parties, starting with Bettino Craxi's PSI

(Socialists), will be almost in ruins. Others, like the Christian Democrats and the post-communist PDS, will survive, but only after losing much of their popular support.

New parties are coming into existence. One, the Northern League (still to a large extent an unknown quantity) could become, after the next elections, our second biggest party. Uncertainty about our political future has increased by the coming changes in our electoral laws.

On April 18 a referendum will set up a new electoral system for the Senate, no longer based on proportional representation. Somehow the chamber of deputies will have to follow suit. Other basic reforms are in sight for our institutions: they ought to make our parties

weaker, and our governments stronger. Great changes are also taking place in the economy. Our wages indexation system has gone. The start of privatisations, the launching of our first pension funds (good news for our anaemic capital markets), as well as the cuts to our welfare state should lead to smaller state deficits and a much-reduced public sector. This should strengthen the economy and cut the grass from under the feet of our political parties.

These reforms have been set in motion by a feeble government and a shaken parliament, which has scores of members under investigation, because political parties are greatly weakened by the wave of scandals.

But will the reforms be completed? More shocks are on the way, and they could either strengthen or endanger the process of rebuilding Italy.

Of course, the old *nomenklatura*—to use an East European term—made up of party men and bureaucrats, is fighting fiercely to preserve its privileges. In its opposition to privatisation it is supported by sectors of the working class which fear de-industrialisation and unemployment. "Capitalism" is still a dirty word for many.

Change involves risks. The old system did have some merit. Our freedoms were preserved (otherwise, the present legal revolution

could never have started). The "system" allowed Italy to achieve huge social progress and to become the fifth economic power in the world.

Despite, or because of, political immobility, people felt confident about the future: they were encouraged to invest, to save, to make money and to spend it. Will our natural Italian vitality survive the present upheavals?

Amid the gloom, I have three main reasons for feeling confident. The first is that I do not always take my fellow countrymen at their word. Our natural dramatic instincts lead us to over-emphasise our moods. Our behaviour is usually more constructive than our words. Secondly, I see Italy as basically a

young society, open to the world, with no intention to stop moving. We have had it too good for too short a time to give it all up without a fight.

Finally, I sense new democratic feelings in the air. Both old and new political forces expect and demand that change should come through referendums, elections, parliamentary reforms as well as the action of the judges, the heroes of today's Italy.

When I hear that another scoundrel has been arrested in connection with corruption, I do not despair. I rejoice. This is an Italian revolution which had to happen.

Arrigo Levi is a former editor of *La Stampa*, and is a columnist for *Corriere della Sera*.

Loss of immunity for Craxi adds to the woes plaguing Amato

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

Italy's prime minister wanted to save politicians accused of bribery from prosecution. Today he must explain why

A COMMITTEE of the Italian Chamber of Deputies yesterday recommended lifting the parliamentary immunity of Bettino Craxi, the former Socialist leader, to face corruption proceedings as the prime minister, Giuliano Amato, tackled the worst political crisis of his eight-month administration.

The government yesterday withdrew its plan to de-criminalise corruption cases involving the illicit financing of political parties, and Signor Amato is to address parliament today to explain why he tried to introduce the highly unpopular legislation by decree.

The legislation would have ended prison sentences for politicians accused of violating laws on party financing, and *La Repubblica* suggested that Signor Amato was inspired by a desire to save Signor Craxi, his political patron, from prosecution.

But the parliamentary committee yesterday recommended that the immunity of Signor Craxi be lifted so that he can face proceedings on charges of corruption, violating party finance laws and receiving stolen goods. A full session of the Chamber of Deputies must now vote to confirm the decision, but it usually follows recommendations by the committee.

Signor Craxi decided at the last minute not to attend the final session of the committee yesterday and instead sent a deposition reiterating his claim to have been persecuted by the judges investigating the scandal.

Magistrates yesterday disclosed they had ordered the arrest of Gabriele Cagliari, the chairman of Italy's state-run energy giant ENI, and Franco Ciatti, the head of ENI's

engineering unit Nuovo Pignone, in connection with alleged bribery in a gas-turbines contract.

Signor Cagliari is the most illustrious industrialist yet accused of corruption in the year-long investigation. ENI is Italy's third largest company after Fiat and IRI and a traditional Socialist fiefdom.

Signor Amato was quoted as saying he felt his coalition allies had let him down and that he was considering resigning "as one always does when one feels alone".

If parliament is not satisfied with the government account of its resort to the decree, which was vetoed by President Scalfaro, the opposition may call a confidence motion in which the coalition will be vulnerable to disgruntled backbenchers.

Some commentators in Rome yesterday gave Signor Amato at best a week to survive and Christian Democratic Party leaders were considering whether to field their new secretary, Mino Martinazzoli, as a candidate to replace him. The prime minister showed his determination to remain by announcing that he will meet his friend, John Major, at Chequers next weekend and travel to Washington to see President Clinton on April 26.

But even if he resists the parliamentary storm, his ambition to convert what started as a government transition into a lasting administration appears doomed.

President Scalfaro, who was formerly his staunchest supporter, evidently has lost sympathy with Signor Amato. Giovanni Conso, the newly appointed justice minister, has threatened to resign and become the sixth minister to leave the eight-month-old government.

On Sunday night Signor Amato was greeted with cries of "thieves" and "clowns" when he addressed students at the prestigious Bocconi University in Milan. And Francesco Cossiga, the former president, commented: "Giuliano thinks that if he resigns the world and the country will collapse. But I do not think that anything will collapse at all."

Before President Scalfaro vetoed the decree, it had been assumed Signor Amato would continue in office until a referendum on political reform is held on April 18. The referendum is expected to give overwhelming support to abolition by parliament of the system of proportional representation in favour of a "first past the post" system closer to the British model.

Leading article, page 19

Cagliari: ENI energy chairman accused



Up in arms: an injured woman being helped away from a Belgrade protest against Serbia's hardline leadership. Police arrested a government critic, and the woman suffered a broken leg trying to stop a police van

Germany vows to participate in airdrops

Convoy fails to reach wounded Muslims

FROM ADAM LEBOR IN BELGRADE AND MICHAEL BINYON IN BONN

THE faltering United Nations relief effort to eastern Bosnia was again halted yesterday. Bosnian Serb commanders refused to allow a convoy through to the besieged village of Konjevic Polje, despite guarantees from Bosnian Serb authorities that it would be allowed through.

A dozen trucks carrying medical aid were stopped at the Serbian border town of Mali Zvornik, said a spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Belgrade. "We are seeking clarification with those on the spot and at a higher level," she said.

UN officials said earlier this week that they hoped to get the convoy to Konjevic Polje, where more than 70 people are seriously wounded, and to send a convoy today to Srbenica, where between 20 and 30 people are reportedly dying daily, and at least 9,000 are desperate to leave, relief officials say.

In Geneva, Michael Barton, the World Health Organisation spokesman, said Srbenica was threatened by

typhoid, and 11 tonnes of medicine should be dropped there from the air immediately, the Belgrade-based Tanjug news agency reported.

General Philippe Morillon, commander of UN peacekeepers in Bosnia, has been negotiating this week with Bosnian Serb leaders in Pale, capital of their self-proclaimed republic outside Sarajevo, about evacuating the sick and wounded from the handful of Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia.

Fighting continues in the western suburbs of Sarajevo and in the north where Bosnian radio reported shelling of government army positions in the towns of Brcko and Gradacac. However, there were no reports of big battles in the east. Earlier this week, Sefer Halilovic, commander of the Bosnian government forces, had threatened to launch a counter-offensive in eastern Bosnia.

Larry Hollingsworth, head of UNHCR operations in the former Yugoslavia, said yesterday he had nothing but admiration for General Morillon. Tanjug reported. Mr

Hollingsworth's remarks follow persistent reports of a rift between UN aid workers and UN peacekeepers over the relief effort.

Mr Hollingsworth said that General Morillon's mission to Cerska, which last week fell to Bosnian Serb forces, and Konjevic Polje, had given relief agencies all the information they needed to draft a plan for sending in aid.

The German government, which is smarting under allied contempt for its refusal to help international peacekeeping operations, has leaked news that German armed forces will join the American airdrop of humanitarian supplies at the end of the month.

The Bundeswehr is engaged in intensive training for the drops and will practise alongside the Americans later this week. German cargo planes are not equipped with air-to-air refuelling, essential for flying in bad weather at night, and so will fly in formation with American aircraft.

Bonn has found a loophole in the disputed constitutional ban on joining military opera-

tions outside the Nato area by arguing that this is a humanitarian not a military mission. However, pressure is growing abroad and within the coalition government for full German participation in UN and Nato peace operations.

A British admiral has been quoted in Bonn as saying the Germans should take time out from Nato and report back to the alliance when they had got over their egocentric preoccupations. The tart remark from the unnamed officer echoes another damning report, widely published here, by German liaison officers at the American infantry school in Fort Benning which said Americans now see German military importance on a par with that of South Korea.

An invitation for German forces to join in US military exercises was cancelled recently because of American reluctance to share information. Meanwhile further support for the Vance-Owen peace plan, came yesterday from President Yeltsin, who said there was no alternative to the two envoys' package.

His warning was echoed by Andrei Kozyrev, the foreign minister who is a strong supporter of Mr Yeltsin. He said that the country risked tearing itself apart in civil war unless the constitutional fray was ended soon.

On Monday Mr Yeltsin unveiled a proposal for a "law on power" to establish the respective jurisdictions of the executive and parliament in a last-minute attempt to avert an all-out clash in the congress. But Mr Khasbulatov pre-empted congress's response by telling reporters at yesterday's parliamentary session: "This is not a suggestion we can take seriously. It is some kind of game."

Games abound at the congress, a convocation of more than 1,000 instinctively conservative deputies elected before the August coup and putty in the hands of the manipulative Mr Khasbulatov, whose knowledge of the constitution's vagaries and ability to twist the wording and procedure of votes to his liking are without parallel.

Yeltsin twists and turns to stay in power

FROM ANNE McELROY IN MOSCOW

THE Congress of People's Deputies, Russia's highest legislature, and President Yeltsin's main stumbling block as he fights to keep his reforms on course and himself in power, convened today for an extraordinary session with conservatives and democrats fiercely intent on collision.

Russian Khasbulatov, chairman of both the standing parliament and the congress, and the main challenger to Mr Yeltsin, yesterday made it clear that he has no intention of sparing the battered Russian leader an assault on his authority. He prematurely rejected the president's latest proposal for a compromise agreement to end the constitutional crisis.

Mr Yeltsin, who has been veering dizzily between strong words and conciliatory gestures in response to the hardening of opposition against him, chose the latter yesterday, saying that he was prepared to discuss any suggestion to end the discord.

At a meeting in the Kremlin yesterday to canvass support, regional leaders warned that Moscow's power struggle could spill over into the regions, risking civil war on the unstable Russian periphery. Aleksandr Galazov, North Ossetia's leader, said: "The situation in the regions is under control for now, but if what is happening in the centre spreads to the provinces, then Russia will without doubt cease to be a unified state."

His warning was echoed by Andrei Kozyrev, the foreign minister who is a strong supporter of Mr Yeltsin. He said that the country risked tearing itself apart in civil war unless the constitutional fray was ended soon.

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Army in disarray, page 16

Hogg says to resume

Egyptian Cop Islamic extremist

China joins defiant

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US widens bombing enquiry

New York: The FBI now believes a number of Muslims who worshipped at the same mosque were involved in a conspiracy to bomb the World Trade Centre and were also connected to the assassination in 1990 of the extremist rabbi Meir Kahane (Kate Muir writes). Police have linked the arrested suspect, Muhammad Salameh, with El Sayid Nosair, the man tried for assassinating Rabbi Kahane.

Status changed

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia's parliament has voted to remove the legal immunity of the nine sultans who are the country's hereditary rulers. The sultans, under public pressure, have agreed to the change. (Reuters)

Reign ends

Antananarivo: The 17-year rule of Madagascar's President Didier Ratsiraka officially ended when the country's highest court named Albert Zafy runaway winner of presidential elections. (Reuters)

Kabul barrage

Kabul: The fragile ceasefire in Afghanistan was shattered by a barrage of up to 70 missiles which pounded on to the capital, killing 22 civilians and wounding 150. (AFP)

China switch

New York: China, an ally of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge, unusually joined 14 UN Security Council members in endorsing May elections without Khmer participation. (Reuters)



Getting in on the act: Catherine Deneuve holds up the César she was awarded in Paris after being voted best actress for her role in the film *Indochine*, set in the French colonial Far East

Far right scares German gypsies

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN BONN

AS BONN'S political establishment tried to dismiss as a freak protest the gains of the far right in Hesse's elections, a German gypsy council gave a warning yesterday that neo-Nazis were playing on creeping racism to pose as the champions of law and order.

The group expressed outrage after an extreme nationalist fringe group in Cologne put up a ransom and hundreds of posters for the capture of a gypsy woman from Macedonia who has gone into hiding in defiance of an expulsion order by the city. The woman, Nidra Pampurova, was separated from her two young children and expelled to Macedonia before being smuggled back by left-wing activists and offered shelter in Cologne. The city council and the interior minister of North Rhine-Westphalia have refused to reconsider her case, but they have denounced

the vigilante bounty-hunting by the German League, cutting off its telephone and fax. The Greens and the Council for Understanding of Roma and Sinti (the official terminology for gypsies in Germany) yesterday said the deliberate exaggeration of tougher asylum regulations by Cologne city officials created a climate that allowed neo-Nazis to court respectability. The city's actions allowed extremists to switch from illegal attacks on asylum seekers to support for official actions taken against asylum-seekers.

Ignatz Bubis, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, played down the significance of the election result but insisted that the radical right was on the march, a claim that carries particular force in view of his recent spirited and popular defence of German democracy to foreign audiences, especial-

ly in Israel. His warning is backed by commentators.

The real winners in Hesse were not street-brawling neo-Nazis and skinhead groups who have been isolated or banned, but the Republicans. Franz Schönhuber, their leader, has made the influx of foreigners a main electoral theme. The Republicans, who will probably claim ten seats in Frankfurt as well as dozens in other Hesse cities, want to bolster their respectability by co-operating at local level with the Christian Democrats, and especially the conservative Christian Social Union in Bavaria.

So far the CDU and CSU have flatly refused to have any truck with them, but as the electoral pressures grow on Helmut Kohl, the chancellor may be forced to adopt many Republican policies to forestall defections by the right wing of his party.

Israel balks at meeting

Hogg says PLO wants to resume peace talks

By EVE-ANN PRENTICE, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

PALESTINIANS are "very anxious" to return to the Middle East peace talks, Douglas Hogg, the Foreign Office minister, said yesterday after the first talks at ministerial level between Britain and the PLO since the Gulf war.

The meeting between Mr Hogg, two senior officials from the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and the leader of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations has prompted an official protest from Israel. Mr Hogg met Faisal Husseini, head of the Palestinian negotiating team; Haef Fahoum, the head of the PLO's European section; and Afif Safieh, the organisation's London representative.

Confusion over the West's policy towards contacts with the PLO followed yesterday's talks, when America said it would adhere "for the time being" to its policy of banning contacts with the organisation.

The Arab-Israeli peace negotiations broke down in De-

cember when Israel deported more than 400 Palestinians to no man's land on the Israeli-controlled security zone in southern Lebanon. The Palestinians were accused of being activists for the Islamic resistance movement Hamas.

Yesterday's talks at the Foreign Office are believed to have come after Washington urged London to try to revive the Middle East peace process. Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, said in Tunis that he welcomed the meeting, claiming it would strengthen Europe's role in the American-brokered peace process.

After yesterday's talks, Mr Hogg said Israeli moves on the deportations would help to bring the PLO back into the peace process. "I think that the future use of the deportation weapon will be extremely undesirable," he said. "I think that they [the Palestinians] would be very anxious to return to the peace talks, but they do see some obstacles. They are concerned about the

question of deportation, and further movement on the question would greatly facilitate their ability to come back into the talks."

In an apparent move to placate the Israeli government, Mr Hogg said: "I think that the present Israeli prime minister, Mr Rabin, is the prime minister most likely to be able to make a long-lasting agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis."

Israel, however, said the British move signalled to the Palestinians that they could gain international legitimacy without a commitment to return to the peace talks. Yossi Beilin, Israel's deputy foreign minister, summoned Andrew Burns, the British ambassador, to deliver a formal protest. In Jerusalem an Israeli court has ordered the release of a 14-year-old Palestinian girl, held on suspicion of throwing a bottle at a bus, after hearing that she was held for hours in a tiny space of half a square metre between two cupboards.



Manacled defiance: members of the fundamentalist Islamic Group shouting anti-government slogans as they were led into court to face trial yesterday

Muslim defendants stage court protest

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN HAERSTAP, EGYPT

MUSLIM extremists accused of attacking tourists brought chaos to a military court yesterday, giving victory signs and proclaiming Omar Abdel-Rahman, the radical blind sheikh now living in America, as their leader.

Police have linked two followers of the sheikh to last month's bombing of New York's World Trade Centre. Since that attack and a bomb in a Cairo coffee house on the same day, the Islamic Group, to which the 43 defendants at yesterday's trial are believed to belong, has warned all foreigners to leave Egypt or be attacked. The threat has spread panic among Egypt's large expatriate community.

Packed into steel cages in a converted theatre in this isolated desert camp 25 miles northeast of Cairo, the bearded defendants held copies of the Koran in their manacled hands and maintained a show of noisy defiance despite the threat of execution hanging over many of them. Another six extremists were tried in their absence.

The trial is part of President Mubarak's increasingly desperate attempt to stem the tide of fundamentalism now

sweeping through Egypt. He ordered that it be held in a military court although the defendants are civilians.

Before the trial began, one defendant read a collective statement from his courtroom cage admitting a list of crimes. He said that among other acts of violence, the group had assassinated Anwar Sadat, then president, in 1981. Under a banner, in English, declaring "Islam is coming", the other defendants took up a deafening chant echoing his sentiments.

The men in the dock are all young men from Upper Egypt, the main fundamentalist stronghold, where more suspects were arrested yesterday for distributing leaflets urging the overthrow of the government and condemning tourism. The charges against the men in court included attacks on five tourist buses and a Nile cruiser as part of a plot to topple the government. The most serious of 17 attacks on tourists, one last October in which a British nurse was killed in a bus ambush in Upper Egypt, is not on the charge sheet, apparently because the perpetrators are still being hunted.

Egyptian Copts flee Islamic extremism

By CHRISTOPHER WALKER

THE upsurge of Islamic terrorism in Egypt is making life harder for the six million Coptic Christian minority, record numbers of whom are emigrating to escape discrimination.

Antoine Sidhom, publisher of the *al-Watani* newspaper, mouthpiece of the Copts, who trace their roots back to St Mark in the first century, said discrimination had reached a peak in schools where the fundamentalist teachers "sneer at the souls of the Copts" and "hate the souls of the Christians".

In a front-page article, Mr Sidhom accused the Egyptian security forces of turning a blind eye to the activities of Muslim extremists waging a violent campaign to transform the country into an Iranian-style Islamic state. "I have detailed information from various quarters in Upper Egypt that they [the militants] are present everywhere. Their orders to people are respected and carried out with the knowledge of the police. The names of their leaders are even known to the police, who carry out their instructions and wishes."

Egypt's Christians, who make up 10 per cent of the population, belong to a variety of different churches, but they are usually referred to as Copts, the largest sect, headed by an Egyptian pope.

Coptic children, too young sometimes to realise what the spread of Islamic fanaticism means, claimed that extremist teachers have been inciting Muslim students not to play with them, accusing them of being atheists and infidels. Magdi, nine, knows that to

be a Christian in Egypt is to be different. He tells other children that he is a Muslim so that they will agree to play with him. Imad Atiyeh is five years older and has never been to a Muslim house or had a Muslim friend home. "They make fun of us at school, they humiliate us, curse us and refuse to play with us," she said. "They provoke fights with us to beat us."

At some schools Coptic girls have been forced to wear the *hijab* (the veil). Coptic students hide their crosses underneath their clothes, and in poorer districts Coptic churches have 24-hour armed guards. Students have reported that fundamentalist teachers have scrapped Christian philosophers from the curriculum and replaced them with Muslim ones. Islamic militants killed 13 Christians in a massacre in and around two villages in Upper Egypt last May.

The Christians are still among the country's richest and best educated citizens, but they claim that in the new atmosphere of mounting hatred even scholarships are being given in preference to Muslims. "I know I do not have a chance here," Imad Fayez, 21, said. "When I get the means to emigrate to Europe or Canada, I will."

Supporting their claims to discrimination in all walks of public life, Egypt's Christians repeatedly point to the career of probably the world's most famous Copt, Boutros Boutros Ghali, the United Nations secretary-general. Before his UN appointment he was not even made Egyptian foreign minister, although he held the deputy's position for years.

China joins critics of defiant Pyongyang

By DAVID WATTS

CHINA and Japan have added to the international pressure on North Korea to permit inspection of its two main nuclear facilities before a United Nations deadline later this month.

If Pyongyang fails to accept a visit from International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors, the UN Security Council is likely to impose sanctions on the

cl. The Chinese appear to have yielded to American persuasion that North Korea has the potential to destabilise northeast Asia.

Yesterday Kichiro Miyazawa, the Japanese prime minister, said a nuclear-armed North Korea would threaten Japan and urged Pyongyang to let the UN inspection team visit two military sites. Japan should regard the inspections as the biggest issue in talks between Tokyo and Pyongyang.

Discussions to improve relations between the two countries broke up in Peking in November. New talks have not been scheduled.

On February 25, the atomic agency gave North Korea one month to grant access to the sites at Yonghyon. Pyongyang rejected the demand, saying inspection would be a violation of its sovereignty.

A senior North Korean defector claimed 18 months ago that Pyongyang had an underground research facility at Bakchon, 60 miles north of the capital, which was developing a nuclear weapons capability. There are two other important nuclear plants nearby at Yonghyon.



state, which is arguably the world's most isolated. That its closest remaining ally is now prepared to join this process is a particularly telling blow for the regime of President Kim Il Sung. It is understood that China has told the North Koreans that they can expect no protection from Peking at the security coun-

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NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY IS A MEMBER OF IAUPTD

Unita return to bush signals new round in Angolan civil war

By SAM KILEY
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ANGOLANS were yesterday warned to prepare for a second long and bloody civil war as Jonas Savimbi summoned his Unita rebels back into the bush and Unita threatened to destroy vital oil installations.

"It is necessary for the people to realise that this will be a protracted war," General João de Matos, head of Angola's government forces, said. Angolans needed "to keep our heads cool, have hope and mobilise ourselves to face Unita's terrible war machine". Dr Savimbi was meanwhile talking war in one breath and peace in another. In remarks monitored by the BBC yesterday, he ordered Unita guerrillas back to the bush, saying they should reorganise disbanded units to continue the fight against the government. At the same time Dr Savimbi, in an address on his movement's radio station, demanded a change of venue and replacement of the United Nations mediator in Angola as the price of Unita participation in further peace talks with the government.

Dr Savimbi's comments fol-

Aid agencies fear for the trapped population after Huambo's fall. Unita insists that peace depends on a new UN mediator

lowed the recapture by his forces of the strategic central highland city of Huambo at the weekend. "I am launching a general appeal to all Unita armed forces to gather together in their old areas. We have uniforms, arms, ammunition, bombs and food," he said. "We will immediately order the reorganisation of your units in order to continue with the battles for the sake of bringing dignity to the Bantu people in their land of origin. Come quickly. I know that you will trust my word."

The government estimates that 1.7 million of Angola's ten million people have been forced to leave their homes due to the fighting, and a further 500,000 are suffering from drought in the far south. Unita officials outside the country insist that they are anxious for peace and an end to civil war which has cost at least 360,000 lives. After a 16-month peace monitored by the United Nations, intense fight-

ing has resumed, culminating in the capture of Huambo.

At least 10,000 people are thought to have died in 55 days of fighting for Huambo, Angola's second largest city. The remaining 540,000 population has been without food or water supplies and cholera and typhoid have broken out.

Aid agencies are lobbying both sides to allow relief to be sent to the city, so far without success.

General de Matos warned that an increasing number of people would be affected by future fighting because it had spread to urban areas. "The number of casualties will, therefore be considerable," he added, perhaps higher than in the first civil war.

Dr Savimbi, spelling out his terms for Unita attendance at UN-mediated peace talks, denounced Margaret Anstee, the special envoy to Angola of Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN secretary-general. "As long as she is here, there will be no negotiations, because she has no experience in African affairs. She should leave," he said. Unita wanted a "person of prestige" to represent Dr Boutros Ghali — "if possible an African".

Unita radio, "The Voice of Resistance of the Black Cockle", said yesterday that, if the government attempted to recapture the oil refining town of Soyo close to the Congo river, installations there would be "neutralised".

Soyo, a vital logistics base for the offshore oil fields and in the Cabinda enclave, produced about a third of Angola's refined oil (550,000 barrels per day) until it was taken by Unita with the help of white mercenaries in January.

Since then there have been numerous reports that the government intends to recapture Soyo and is recruiting mercenaries to help, mostly from South Africa.

The Pretoria government said at the weekend that it would block any attempt to recruit its citizens for military adventures abroad, although South African units fought alongside Unita against Angolan government forces and their Cuban allies up to the 1991 ceasefire.

Oil revenues from Soyo had been used to pay for the war effort. Envoys from the government have been sent all over the world on arms buying missions. Last week a government spokesman confirmed that one emissary had been sent to Cuba.

Lasaka, a Zambian authority yesterday released three opposition figures but held 21 others arrested last week in connection with an alleged plot to topple the 15-month old government of President Chiluba.

Those released included Tilyenji Kaunda, one of two sons of Kenneth Kaunda, the former president, detained in connection with the alleged plot. Wezi Kaunda, still in detention, is alleged to have been the organiser of the so-called "Zero Option" plan, which allegedly sought to instigate civil strife. Security sources said it was unlikely more releases would be made soon. (AFP)



Walk on the wild side: a handcuffed man is led away by law enforcement officers after a building near the Branch Davidian cult's compound in Texas, which has been besieged for ten days, was searched for weapons

Lawyers to question King in retrial

FROM KATE MUIR
IN NEW YORK

RODNEY King, whose savage beating and the subsequent acquittal of the police officers involved sparked the Los Angeles riots last year, was expected to take the witness stand yesterday in the civil rights trial of four Los Angeles police officers accused of beating him.

Although Mr King became a household name when the amateur video of the beating was shown on television, this is the first time he has told his side of the story under oath. In the previous criminal trial prosecutors decided not to ask Mr King to testify when he was confused and unwell in case it prejudiced the case.

The lack of testimony from the victim allowed the police officers' lawyers to portray Mr King as dangerous, violent and "an animal". Lawyers said that the four policemen were sympathetically viewed by the jury because they were present in court, while Mr King remained a shadowy figure on tape.

Mr King, 27, appears to be more bullish about the new trial, where the officers are accused of using excessive force and depriving him of his constitutional rights. In a statement released before his appearance yesterday he said: "Witnesses that people didn't know about are being brought out, good evidence that should have been presented earlier."

Federal prosecutors know the risks they are taking by letting Mr King face a day-long cross-examination. His criminal record for the armed robbery of a grocery shop will come out, as will the fact that he was on parole, drunk driving and speeding on the night of his arrest. He also has a poor memory of the beating — perhaps due to the blows to his head — which may make him vulnerable to cross-examination.

Since the beating, Mr King has been arrested on suspicion of soliciting a prostitute, beating his wife, and drunk-driving, but no charges have been brought.

Clinton backs Democratic call for bigger deficit cuts

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton put his weight behind a new round of spending cuts by backing a scheme from Congressional Democrats to cut the budget by an additional \$63 billion (£43 billion) over five years.

These cuts are significantly higher than had been previously estimated, and the president indicated yesterday that he seeks even more reductions to bring the budget deficit down below the present benchmark of \$200 billion by 1997.

Mr Clinton said he was "encouraged" by the \$63 billion package. "I think that in the end there will be further cuts and there will be a much more substantial reduction in the deficit than the estimates showed," he said. He gave an upbeat assessment of the prospects of the budget, which is due to present on March 23.

On its own, however, the effect of this package will be merely to cover an estimated \$67 billion budget shortfall over a five-year period, forecast by the Congressional Budget Office. The Democrat package turned out to be \$8 billion higher than had previously been agreed behind closed doors, which suggests that a last-minute scramble had taken place to find additional cuts to appease conservative Democrats.

The two houses of Congress now appear to be outdoing

each other in their enthusiasm to reduce spending. Senate Democrats are trying with an even more stringent package, involving cuts of as much as \$90 billion. The extra cuts amount to no more than 1 per cent of the budget over the five-year period, but they may be just enough to keep conservative Democrats on board.

One of their leaders, Charles Stenholm, the Texas representative, announced that the "gridlock is over". Some of them had previously expressed their disappointment in public that Mr Clinton's economic package did not contain more cuts. Democrats are nervous that they may be perceived as being too cautious about spending cuts and too radical about tax rises.

No official details of the new package have been released, but it is understood that the military will be asked to make an additional sacrifice of almost \$1 billion. The proposed defence cuts have been fiercely opposed because of their uneven regional impact, especially on states such as California which are still gripped by a deep recession.

More opposition is expected later this week, when the Pentagon announces a round of base closures as part of its commitment to trim the budget. Science and space research will also be hit, raising doubts about the president's

commitment to some high-profile projects, such as the space station.

The one remaining subject for dispute is the president's \$30 billion "stimulus" package. Mr Clinton and his officials repeat almost daily that the much-heralded recovery was a statistical mirage because it did not create enough full-time employment. This serves the purpose of convincing conservative Democrats not to tamper with the \$16 billion job-creation element of the package, which Mr Clinton seems determined to defend.

Some Democrats, however, insist a trimming of this package is inevitable.

The House appropriations committee was yesterday due to vote on the package. It was expected that the committee would approve it, but there remain concerns on the Democratic side about the fate of this package once put in the House of Representatives.

Gesvres-le-Chapitre. As President Mitterrand met Mr Clinton in Washington to discuss troubled transatlantic trade relations, Jacques Chirac, the French opposition leader, said France should resort to an "empty chair" policy in the European Community, if necessary, to block a Gatt world trade agreement obstacle to its agricultural interests. (Reuters)

FBI casts Texas cult leader as unfit to negotiate

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN WACO

FBI negotiators trying to draw the heavily armed Branch Davidian cult from its fortified compound without further bloodshed must first ascertain the state of mind of David Koresh, the cult leader.

For most of the ten-day siege, the FBI has tried to maintain the impression that Mr Koresh may be a religious zealot but he is ultimately a reasonable man with whom it is worth trying to negotiate. The FBI now paints a picture of a volatile, irritable and aggressive fanatic who, if he is not deterred, is giving a very passable impression of it. At Monday's press conference, Special Agent Rob Ricks listed Mr Koresh's more provocative comments in a sort of litany of his sins. "We are ready for war. Let's get it on. Your talk is becoming in vain. I'm going to give you the opportunity to save yourselves before you get blown away."

"It is not my intention to paint a totally negative picture," said Mr Ricks, before doing exactly that, secure in the knowledge that Mr Koresh (and possibly his 106 followers) are closely watching the daily press briefings.

The change of tone is intentional. The authorities have adopted a "good cop — bad cop" tactic intended to destabilise the cult leader and convince him that the authorities' patience is not endless. The most stark example of this was the reaction to Mr Koresh's claims to have explosives and rockets capable of destroying armoured personnel carriers. Rather than back off, the authorities announced they were bringing in 67-tonne Abrams battle tanks (without their cannons).

The FBI is genuinely annoyed by Mr Koresh's vainglorious, protected negotiations. His children have been freed since Friday.

Mr Koresh is no fool, and by referring his decisions to God he has left himself free to break his word at will. The FBI knows it is effectively in a stalemate at the whim of a man who appears more provocative by the hour.

As Mr Ricks points out, to storm the compound would not only endanger the lives of the 17 children thought to remain inside, but it would also provide Mr Koresh with exactly the apocalyptic showdown he has long prophesied.

Although Steven Higgins, the director of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, said yesterday that the authorities are prepared to stay "indefinitely", the FBI has hinted darkly at "contingency plans". There have been unconfirmed reports that members of the Delta Force, the American version of the SAS, may have been brought in.

In recent days, cult members have been seen at the compound windows brandishing weapons and taunting those outside. Many of the 400 or so agents camped out in the dusty Texas fields around the compound, who have seen four of their colleagues killed, would like nothing better than for the cult leader and his adult followers to emerge from the compound shooting.

Kenya's opposition takes on Moi as economy crumbles

By SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

KENYA'S opposition politicians will today appear in court to answer charges of addressing unlicensed meetings in a showdown with the government of President Moi which could provoke widespread unrest in the capital.

George Njor, executive director of the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Asili, gave a warning that the summons issued to Kenneth Matiba, the party's chairman, might lead to a confrontation between opposition supporters and the police. The apparently trivial summons was being

Highlands in the west of the country or he would bring the president down.

Mr Matiba, an MP, was runner-up to Mr Moi in presidential elections in December which international observers said might have reflected the will of the Kenyan people but could not be described as free and fair. His ultimatum was dismissed by the government spokesmen, but struck a chord with many Kenyans who in the past two weeks have begun to feel the effects of a 35-40 per cent expansion in the money supply since the middle of last year and inflation running at more than 50 per cent.

On Sunday an International Monetary Fund team left Kenya after two weeks in the country assessing progress towards democracy and economic reform before it decides on whether to grant the government access to about £243 million in aid which was suspended in November 1991.

A Western diplomat in Nairobi said: "The economic situation in Kenya is verging on the catastrophic. There have been sharp increases in fuel prices and in the prices of staple foods. Kenyans have never been unable to afford food before and they are not likely to remain quiet. If the Matiba summons does not set things off, then something else will."

Last night spokesmen for Mr Moi said that he thought that his administration had "done enough" to win back foreign aid support — worth about £27 million a month — but that he would resist cutting back heavily on the civil service, which employs 270,000 people, and on radically reforming agricultural marketing boards.



Matiba: summons seen as potential flashpoint

seen in Nairobi as a potential flashpoint because it comes against a background of clashes between market people and students last week.

In addition, ethnic fighting between Mr Moi's Kikuyu tribe and the majority Kikuyu and Luo has continued for nine months, leaving 750 dead and thousands homeless after their shambas (villages) were burnt by marauding warriors. Earlier this week Mr Matiba issued the Kenyan president with an "ultimatum" to put an end to the clashes in the former White

Politicians do battle over a defence force starved of cash

FROM ROBERT COCKBURN IN SYDNEY

TWO hundred feet above the stormy Great Southern Ocean off South Australia, a plush executive jet banked steeply to start a dawn raid on Australia's newest warship, HMAS Melbourne. Later the commercially operated jet towed a target for F18 fighters on a live weapons training exercise.

The popular joke is that the Australian Defence Force (ADF) trains with civilian Lear jets in case of an attack by corporate raiders who did so much damage in the 1980s. In reality, the armed forces are so short of funds that they can no longer use military aircraft for vital training exercises.

Labor's \$A25 billion (£12.5 billion) programme, conceived in the 1980s to create the region's most powerful nation, has left the ADF with an impressive array of hardware but with no money to pay for staff, training, maintenance or ammunition to defend the nation.

An opposition win in Saturday's federal election would return Australia to a



past era of deterrence. Alexander Downer, the Liberal defence spokesman, has drawn up a policy to purchase even more military equipment to give Australia the capability to fight a defensive war deep in the Asia Pacific region.

But this, the biggest economic issue in the election, goes undebated, despite a call by leading academics to divert some of the funds into areas of growing domestic need. Despite a recession and an end to the Cold war, both government and opposition ignore the American and European initiatives to scale down defence commitments.

Instead they have used defence to engage in a party political arms race costing \$A10 billion a year that is having serious consequences at home and a destabilising effect in the region.

"Essentially the government has agreed to a defence strategy beyond its means," Dr Graeme Cheeseman, of the Defence Force Academy in Canberra, said. "It has continued to approve the acquisition of major capital assets, such as submarines and frigates, but has not supplied the money to pay for anything else."

Dr Cheeseman, a former army major, teaches at Australia's most important defence establishment. So far he has gone unheard, as have other strategists such as Andrew Mack, head of the department of international relations at the National University in Canberra. Professor Mack says that Australia's northern defences are so thin that an invader could easily strike after 5pm, when the Coastguard goes home.

Behind the jokes, there is a

serious side to the crisis in defence spending and planning. The lack of funds to operate existing equipment is being blamed for an increase in RAAF aircraft crashes, because pilots are receiving inadequate training.

The RAAF now has more F18s than pilots to fly them, but those who are employed fly only 15 hours a month instead of the 22 required by Nato. Four F18s have so far crashed.

Labor's policy to become self-reliant in defence has also collapsed. According to Dr Cheeseman, there is enough ammunition to fight a war for a week. The harpoon missiles on warplanes and submarines in government defence films now exist only in paper deals with the United States.

Canberra: John Hewson, the Liberal-National opposition leader, asked his wife, Carolyn, to carry out his campaign radio interviews yesterday, four days before the election, because he was suffering from flu and a throat infection. (Reuters)



Lending a hand: John Hewson, the opposition leader, greeting supporters at a rally in Perth

Contra kidnapers demand sackings

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

HEAVILY armed Contra rebels holding Alfonso Robelo, Nicaragua's ambassador to Costa Rica, yesterday issued broad political demands as their price for releasing him and some ten other people taken with him on Monday.

Señor Robelo is himself a former Contra political leader. The rebel demands include social reforms and the dismissal of Antonio Lacayo, Nicaragua's chief minister and son-in-law of President Chamorro, and General Humberto Ortega, the army commander and former Sandinista military chief. At the kidnapers' request, the Archbishop of Managua, Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, flew to Costa Rica to lead negotiations for the release of the hostages, who were seized by four masked gunmen carrying AK47 rifles who stormed the Nicaraguan embassy in San José, the Costa Rican capital, on Monday.

According to Costa Rican sources, the hostage-takers are led by José Urbina Lara, a maverick former rebel of the Contra army, which was inter-

mittently funded by Washington throughout the 1980s until it was officially demobilised in 1990. The sources say Señor Urbina Lara was also a member of the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement, a political group once headed by Señor Robelo. Señor Robelo was an early supporter of the Sandinistas and served on a five-man ruling junta after the 1979 revolution. He joined the Contras after going into exile in 1982.

Señor Urbina Lara was granted political asylum in Costa Rica in 1985 after being jailed in Nicaragua for refusing to do military service in the Sandinista army. He was involved in a diplomatic incident in 1984 after seeking refuge in the Costa Rican embassy in Managua. He was jailed after Sandinista state security agents raided the embassy and captured him.

Yesterday he identified the hostage-takers as members of the "Nicaraguan Patriotic Brigade", an unknown group. The group's demands closely echo the grievances of many Nicaraguans.

Unfortunately for BMW, Mercedes and Audi, What Car?'s 'best luxury car' has just been improved.

Last November, What Car? compared the Lexus LS400 with the BMW 740i, the Audi V8 and the Mercedes 600 SEL. Their verdict?

"The Lexus retains its title as the best luxury car. It is beautifully built, it has a remarkably unruffled ride and the best refinement you'll find at any price." Then they went on: "Now consider the complete specification, the extensive warranty, and the fact that you could buy a Lexus and, against the cost of the nearest priced rival in this test (the BMW), still have change to

buy a small city run-around; and the case in favour of the Lexus becomes overwhelming."

Flattering comments aren't new to the Lexus of course. "A car that is better, dynamically than anything we've ever driven in the top luxury car market" and "a car which is the quietest and most refined you've ever been in," were typical opinions at its launch.

But any hopes the others may have had that complacency would set in, will now be dashed.

Ever since its launch we've been looking at ways to improve it.

And the bad news for Mercedes, BMW and Audi is that for 1993, the Lexus LS400 has been refined in almost fifty ways.

Some of the changes are subtle. A quieter boot lock, for example, and a light inside the seat belt buckle.

Other refinements are more substantial. Air bags for both driver and front seat passenger and seatbelt pre-tensioning make the Lexus even safer.

Modifications to the suspension make the ride even firmer at high speed and smoother at low. Changes to the 4 litre V8 engine make the LS400's already impressive fuel consumption figures even more astonishing. 35.3 mpg at 56 mph, the best in the category.

Alongside all these changes, however, one thing remains reassuringly the same. The 3 year/60,000 mile manufacturer's warranty.

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مركز من الأهل

The former Red Army is now a huge loose cannon at the edge of Europe. Michael Evans assesses its future

A Russian army out of orders

The future of democracy in Russia and the survival of Boris Yeltsin as the Russian leader in the face of growing right-wing opposition are at stake in Moscow today at the opening of the special meeting of the Congress of People's Deputies.

General Pavel Grachev, the Russian defence minister, has promised that the army will remain neutral during the battle between reformists and conservatives. But in Russian politics, the army is never a neutral force. For neither Yeltsin nor his most hardened opponents can win without the support of the army.

This is true even though the former Red Army, the West's most formidable military opponent for 45 years, is today suffering from a serious case of schizophrenia. Still awash with weapons, conventional and nuclear, but lacking the manpower, command and control and motivation to integrate such awesome firepower into a properly managed force, the Russian army's pride and prestige have all but vanished.

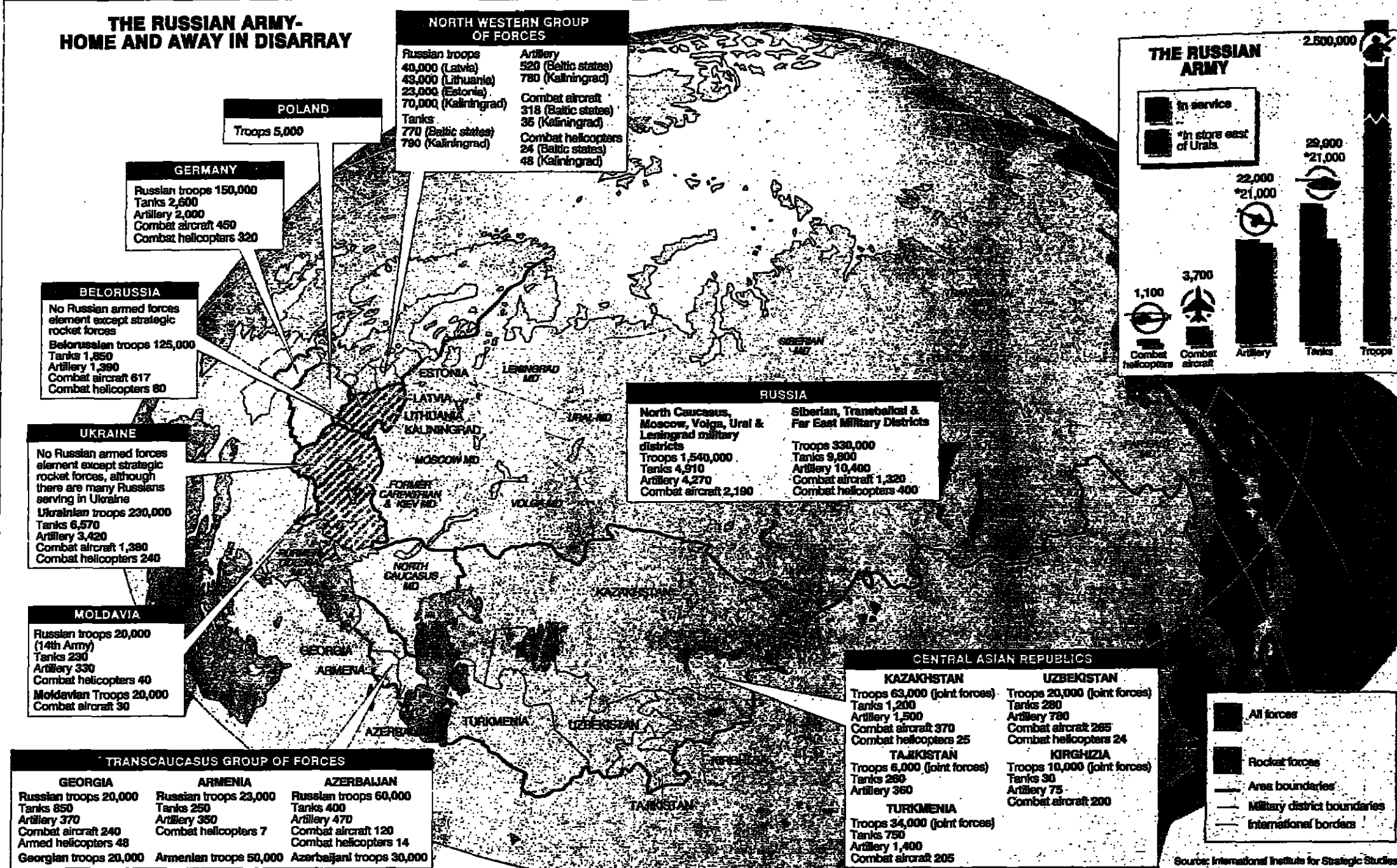
This grim picture of a mighty army in disarray, with more than 500,000 soldiers ordered home to an uncertain future from former Soviet empire garrisons, has been underlined by Western officials visiting military establishments, talking to senior officers and assessing their capabilities and morale.

Experts from the Soviet studies centre at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, share the view of senior Nato officials that despite the formidable firepower at its disposal, the Russian army is no longer a threat to Europe. It is no longer a usable military instrument against first-class opposition. Unit cohesion has gone, the logistics system is breaking down, and spare parts are chaotically unreliable. The idea of a nuclear strike coming out of the blue also seems unlikely, for it could not serve a rational or even an irrational purpose, if one accepts that war is an act of policy.

However, the collapse of the old Soviet military machine and — above all — the inability of the government in Moscow to cope with the economic and social consequences, have created new dangers, which could ultimately play into the hands of the conservatives who oppose Yeltsin's reforms. This could force Russia to revert to a more obstructive foreign policy towards the West.

For in the eyes of the average Russian soldier, his livelihood has been destroyed by the reforms, in particular by Mikhail Gorbachev — probably the most hated man among the Russian military — and also by the West, which aided and abetted him in bringing down communism and dismantling the system which had kept them fed and favoured for decades. A centre still exists theoretically to hold the army together, but in reality there is no longer a meaningful central control. Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, so-called commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), is in truth a man without a proper job. His power is figurative.

THE RUSSIAN ARMY: HOME AND AWAY IN DISARRAY



Yet as Charles Dick, who runs Soviet studies at Sandhurst, says, "most generals hanker after the old unitary state, and almost all favour the retention of more or less unified forces. There is a yearning for order and discipline."

A recent poll of the military showed that only 17 per cent of officers supported Yeltsin's reforms. Two years ago they were suspicious, angry and disillusioned by the changes. Today the mood is one of despair.

Former Soviet army soldiers are having to wrestle with a new definition of loyalty. It is common to find soldiers who still regard Russia and Ukraine as the same country, and cannot accept that the Baltic states are independent. Many Russian soldiers who decided to swear an oath of allegiance to the Ukrainian army because of more favourable economic conditions there are now having second thoughts, because the economy in Ukraine is deteriorating even more rapidly than in Russia.

Draft-dodging in Ukraine is massive. Only 10 per cent of those drafted are turning up. In Russia, draft avoidance last year was twice as great as in 1991. In Moscow, only 7 per cent of the recruiting target was achieved.

General Vladimir Lobov, the former chief of the Soviet

general staff, has said: "The army does not know to whom it is subordinate, whom it is serving or effectively for whom it is fulfilling its military duty."

One third of junior officers have said they want to seek another profession. They are fed up with the army's diminishing prestige. They used to be the cream of society; now they are at the bottom of the league in terms of pay, housing and working conditions.

Ethnic divisions within the army have also become inflamed, with violence and crime between young soldiers sharing barracks. One estimate is that 15,000-20,000 conscript soldiers died non-combat deaths in the second half of the 1980s, many from ethnic violence. This is more than were officially admitted killed in 10 years of war in Afghanistan. It has been claimed that 8,000 soldiers die each year, half of them from suicide, 20 per cent from bullying and 10 per cent in accidents.

Pay is so low and so haphazard that Yeltsin never visits an army garrison without bringing with him a caseful of roubles to keep the soldiers quiet. Officers have been promised that their salaries will be doubled, but unit commanders are turning to a strategy of self-help under which their troops are offered as labour to the local com-

munity in return for money and supplies. This has generated a breed of military warlord. The further east one goes, the more examples there are of deals being hatched between commanders and local authorities: bringing in the harvest, providing fuel, selling guns to Mafia groups, all for cash which can be divided among the soldiers. Such improvisation keeps the troops fed, but highlights the breakdown of Moscow's control.

Some republics are also indiscriminately privatising everything on their territory, with weapons being sold or seized. With no legal authority ruling the armed forces, precious little can be done.

Western visitors to far-flung Russian garrisons and bases receive an alarming insight into the state of the army. John Lough, from the Sandhurst centre, went to the headquarters of Russia's 144th Motor Rifle Division in the district of Talin in Estonia. He reports that there were scarcely any soldiers around. "A lieutenant colonel came up to us who seemed desperate to cry on our shoulders. The day we were there, the commander left to

join the Ukrainian army. "Morale is extremely bad. They feel threatened and discriminated against and abandoned. Ninety-five per cent would lynch Gorbachev and Shevardnadze [the former Soviet foreign minister] if they had the chance."

One senior Russian commander based in the Baltics summed up the bitterness and resentment felt by the army

the army is now seen as a risky bet. A fifth of the cadets at military colleges are not taking up their commissions, and some are leaving midway through the courses. So there is a shortage of junior commanders. In some garrisons there are so few men that officers are doing guard duty.

The younger generations of Russian commanders no longer talk of the threat from Nato.

They refer to the threat from "near abroad" — from their neighbours and other states of the former Soviet Union. The whole strategy has changed accordingly, with a shift in emphasis away from huge tank formations to low-intensity operations with mobile forces.

The aim is to switch from conscription to contracting of troops. The process is already under way. The peacekeeping forces operating outside Russian territory, such as the 201st Motor Rifle Division in Tajikistan, are serving on a contract basis. But the changing policy is causing anger.

Colonel General Igor Sergeyev, commander of the strategic rocket forces, is reported to be desperate to switch as soon as possible to profes-

sional soldiers. He insists that the strategic rocket forces should have priority call on the best. In one SS24 mobile missile unit, for example, 40 per cent of the conscripts have inadequate command of Russian.

But the replacement of conscripts by professionals in three-year contracts is a long-term policy, and General Grachev thinks the peacekeeping units should be professionalised first.

Day to day concerns no longer have to do with military matters. Housing is the main topic of conversation. The Russians in the Baltics will not budge, because they see what happens to other soldiers who are moved out: they end up in tenanted settlements (although there are some new housing blocks).

With housing conditions driving them to despair, the Russian soldiers are just going through the motions of their combat training schedules. Only elite units, such as the airborne troops, do regular training. Troops coming home from Germany are often separated from their equipment and cannot train at all.

Meanwhile, the reforms in the Russian armed forces are proceeding slowly. In the first phase, their strength has been cut by more than 220,000. Staff at the defence ministry have been reduced by 30 per-

cent. During 1992, Russia withdrew from Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics nearly 80,000 servicemen, 2,000 tanks, 1,500 artillery systems and nearly 600,000 tons of materials and equipment.

This year, Moscow plans to recruit by contract 10 per cent of all privates and sergeants. By 1995, the objective is that 35 per cent of all servicemen will have been recruited on a contract basis, and by the year 2000, half of all privates and sergeants will be contracted.

The overall strategy for the Russian armed forces is to convert them into "constant readiness troops" able to act in local conflicts, "rapid deployment forces" capable of carrying out missions in regional troublespots, and "strategic reserves" assigned missions in the event of large-scale war. Like Nato, the aim is to create highly mobile forces, with a reduction in force levels down to 2.1 million by 1995, and to 1.5 million by 1999.

This restructuring is one of the few elements restraining soldiers, particularly younger officers, from throwing in their jobs. If the reshaping works, then by the end of the century a career in the Russian army may not seem so bleak, and some of the prestige and excellence of the former Red Army may have returned.

Moscow is losing control of its armed forces, and now local commanders are contracting out the services of their troops

Riddled by corruption, and with no enemy in sight, the Russian navy is no longer capable of major operations

Sunset for the red sails

In a development worthy of the 18th century, three senior officers of the Far East Russian Fleet were dismissed this week and the Fleet Commander disciplined after four seamen died of malnutrition at a training base on the island of Russky near Vladivostok. Dozens more fell sick with scurvy and stomach infections. The collapse of supplies to the island was apparently aggravated by corruption in the officer corps.

The Russky camp is also known for particularly brutal bullying of younger conscripts. This is known as *dedovschina*, after the Russian word for "grandfather", the military slang for older servicemen. Each year, it causes hundreds of deaths and suicides in the navy and only yesterday another Pacific Fleet officer responsible for training camps, Captain Vladimir Denisenko, was accused of beating up his young driver.

Three hundred years after the creation of the Russian navy by Peter the Great this

part of the armed forces has virtually lost its raison d'être. The Russian army may be in a mess, but it is still needed to fight all around the periphery of the former Soviet Union to keep the peace or defend Russian interests in former Soviet Union areas such as the Caucasus or Moldova. Its future seems secure. A large Russian navy by contrast seems pointless. It would only be needed against a power like Nato and it could never match such strength.

To judge by their public statements, many senior naval officers have withdrawn into a world of fantasy, arguing over the need for battle-fleets and the advantages of aircraft-carriers over anti-submarine forces. Meanwhile the fleet is falling to pieces. The Russian and CIS defence ministers have both admitted in the past week that the fleet is no longer capable of major operations.

Discipline is collapsing, with frightening implications for safety. In January a sailor on the nuclear-powered air-



Russian naval cadets: often victims of brutal bullying

craft-carrier Novorossiysk set fire to a lampshade to get himself with light during a power cut. When this set the hold alight he just shut the door and walked away. The ship was disabled by the fire. The admiral, who was commanding in the Far East, is himself being charged with

criminal negligence by some of his officers.

Corruption is also rampant, with an increasing number of ships and bases being used for commercial purposes and officers taking the profits. The "private corporation" Russo-Balt West, which has been using Russian bases in the

Baltic for private trade and selling off bits and pieces of navy stock is being run quite blatantly by the high command of the Baltic Fleet.

Officers are not ashamed of this. "If the Russian government won't guarantee us even the most basic needs of life, then we will have to help ourselves," one said.

These developments are linked to a sense of purposelessness and a savage decline in living standards. "The whole concept of the Baltic bases is outdated," said one lieutenant. "They don't really defend Russia, and even if they did, it would be against Nato. Does anyone seriously still believe that we are going to go to war with Nato, or Nato with us?"

The question of Sevastopol and the Black Sea Fleet, now situated in the Ukraine and claimed by that state, is a more important one. This is partly because their loss would eliminate Russia completely as a Black Sea and Mediterranean power, but still more for historic reasons. Sevastopol was the scene of two of the most famous and heroic defences in Russian history, against the British and French in 1854-56 and against the Germans in 1940-41.

In one way the navy should be better off than the army. Naval officers tended to be better educated and a high

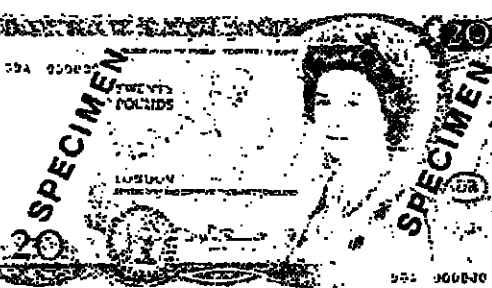
proportion of them swung to "democratic" thinking in the last years of Gorbachev. The navy adopted the St Andrew's flag and other Russian imperial symbols long before the army. All this should make it much easier for the fleet than the army to abandon "Soviet patriotism" and swing to a purely Russian loyalty.

Unfortunately this is not happening. As an officer explained, "the best professionals are leaving the fleet. The ones who are staying are the former Communist political officers and the ones who are not so bright. The former are trying to encourage extreme fascist ideas among the latter."

This combination could make the fleet a bigger threat than even the army to Russia's new-found democracy.

ANATOL LIEVEN

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40,000 Green Cards (Permanent Resident Visas) are being given away to U.S. citizens. The visas will be given to U.S. citizens who have been in the U.S. for at least 10 years. The visas will be given to U.S. citizens who have been in the U.S. for at least 10 years. The visas will be given to U.S. citizens who have been in the U.S. for at least 10 years.

Ribs sp the blues

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Ribs spare the blushes



SARAH MOWER

Even as New York women are busy trying to build themselves up like boxers (see right), over here I'm beginning to detect the equal and opposite rise of the radically puny man. In the lead is the group Suede, a bunch of pale, narrow youths who are being touted as the latest saviours of British pop music. When photographed, they tend to show a lot of skinny naked torso beneath skimpily cut seventies leather jackets or shirts in some obnoxious synthetic. For another reference, look at this month's *Vogue*, where the hip young photographer David Sims is photographed, shirtless, with his jeans riding down just about as far as is legal. The shot invites you not only to count his ribs, but also to compare and contrast his long streak of a body with all the meaty chests that have been served up to us in film, fashion and advertising.

These boys are not wet nellies

It's a shock, but a nice one. Nice for women, I think, at any rate. Maybe nice for men, too — though there's a chance they might feel as affronted by radical puny as many women are by the waifishness that is the female equivalent. Anyway, me — I'm for it. For years, I've been revolted by the sight of tilled, muscle-bound torsos with those straining veins and neck sinews. Yuck! It's not just a question of aesthetics. The real bugbear is that the sexual politics of inflated male muscle are inescapably anti-woman. They tell you uncompromisingly that femininity is right out, beyond the pale. The forceful implication is that any common ground between the male and female physique must be wiped out, destroyed. By extension, any other kind of mutuality between the sexes is similarly disparaged, too. And in any case, what are big muscles for other than bashing up weaker beings... like women?

Another thing: it's difficult to say this without sounding homophobic, but for a woman to look at a parade of muscle-bound Versace or Armani models advertising jeans is to feel totally excluded and even despised. One interpretation of pumped muscle is that it's narcissistic. Any boy who says he lifts weights with the idea of attracting

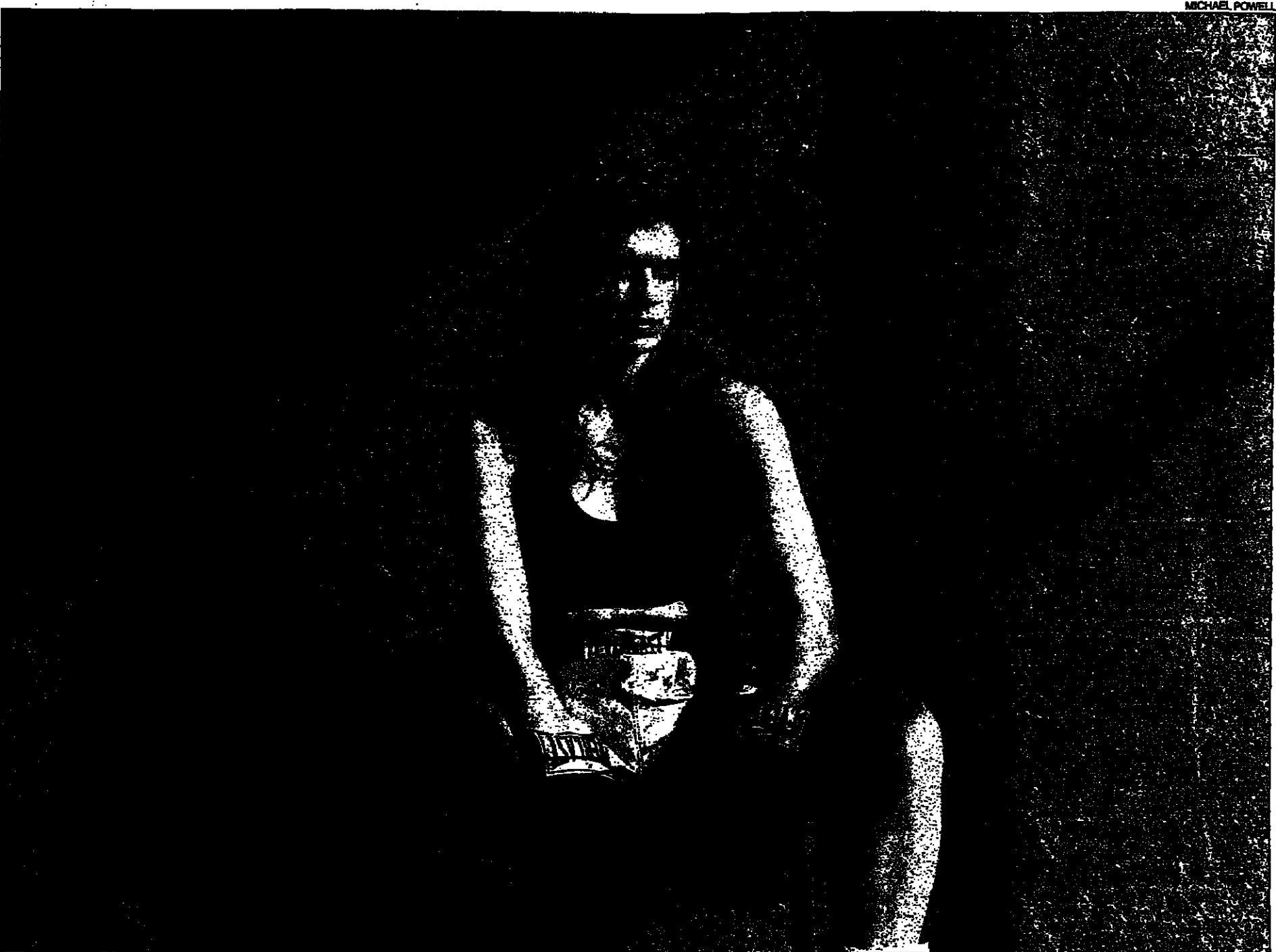
more girl friends is deluding himself. What it really is is a cover for impressing or threatening other men. Women think this is pathetic. The reason that the Chippendales have been such a success is not so much that women are turned on by them (though that is the charade), as that they allow their audiences a safe collective laugh at a certain kind of preposterous maleness that is at root gynae-phobic.

The sexual politics of the new radical puniness may be just as complicated as meanings of male muscle, but at least they are not about aggression, fear and hatred. The images of flat-chested young men now being thrown up by youth culture may be accused, in some cases, of effeminacy, but they are also about a kind of insouciant passive resistance to eighties stereotypes. These boys are not complete wet nellies for all their apparent

vulnerability, they also have a quietly defiant look about them. The sight of them sets off a chain reaction of cultural references — through Ziggy Stardust, Iggy Pop, Keith Richards, right back to the pinks and depictions of St Sebastian. The emotions they rouse in women and girls may be erotic, but they are also subtly meshed in the sisterly and motherly instincts that are nearer the heart of female response than is the Chippendale could ever reach.

Calvin Klein got it wrong, then, when he put superwaif Kate Moss in the picture with Marky-Mark for his underwear ads. Marky has a sweet baby face disconcertingly balanced on top of an overdeveloped torso. Klein was right to see the way things were going when he chose Kate, but he ought to have had her paired up with an analogously puny boy. Together, the waif and the puny are the new wonderment of youth in our times. The encouraging thing is the way they look as if they're capable of having an equal relationship; he without strutting his masculinity, she without endlessly ranting about feminism. They are unsexed, low-key, relentlessly ordinary, silently making a stand against the steroid-and-Wonderbra-induced cartoon that fashion made of us all in the eighties.

Boxing today is not just for the boys. Kate Muir meets the women who spar with the champions at Gleason's Gym



Fit to go into the ring: as a model Deirdre Coleman finds that the risk of a black eye is outweighed by better shape, increased confidence — and extra work in commercials

Knock-out way to exercise

In the shadows under the Brooklyn Bridge, facing the towers of Manhattan, lies America's finest shrine to testosterone: Gleason's Gym. Jake La Motta, Mike Tyson, Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Robinson have all toiled here. This is Boxing Central. Up the grey concrete stairs above a warehouse, behind a metal door, there is a room of aircraft hangar proportions. The soup of warm, sweaty air might just as well be bottled and sold as aftershave for champions. The three-minute bouts and the punchbag thuds and grunts are straight from the soundtrack of the original 1950s Rocky film. Indeed, a photograph of the real Rocky Marciano shares the prize-fighters' wall of fame.

Among this palpable manliness, looking not the least uncomfortable, Lesley Howes is hammering a body-sized punchbag with her boxing gloves. Nobody is paying her the slightest attention, and gradually the back of her grey T-shirt darkens with sweat and her ponytail wifts.

Behind her, sparring in the ring with a male trainer is Deirdre Coleman, dashing in a black sports top and shiny yellow Everlast boxer's shorts, her hair hanging out of the protective helmet as she ducks and bobs and weaves. On the floor, Karen Kusama's trainer is binding her hand with protective bandages and tape for the next bout. Ms Howes runs a gym in Manhattan. Ms Coleman is a model and Ms Kusama is a film-maker. In their spare time, they box. Bruce Silverglade, co-owner of Gleason's Gym, says that the most common profession among the 50 women who regularly attend is that of attorney. "Maybe they need the training to be aggressive in court," he suggests.

Although elsewhere in America women can fight proper matches with each other, New York State boxing regulations ban female fighters. Few of those at Gleason's want a real fight — it is the gruelling, disciplined training that has made boxing an obsession for the seriously fit.

Across the water and further upmarket in Manhattan, it is more like vanity boxing. Suddenly fitness clubs throughout the city are full of boxercise and aerobics classes, a hybrid of aerobics and the skipping, bag-punching and shadow boxing of a professional boxing workout. The women at Gleason's rather look down their noses at the more cosmetic classes. Slug for slug, their training is the same as the men's.

Mr Silverglade has had 400 women join his gym since he put in a female locker room in 1987, and the biggest growth has been recently. Why? Ms Kusama, 24, says she was ground down by the tedium of ordinary exercising. "A lot of boxing isn't about power — it's about movement, a sense of grace, co-ordinating and dodging. And there's so much facing off mentally when you're in the ring that it's surprising how much more exhausting it is than ordinary training. The whole experience is empowering."

Ms Kusama, who lives in the sometimes rough Fort Green area, finds the boxing gives her physical confidence. There is a mental boost too, a feeling that a woman used to walking into this men's locker-room atmosphere will be more comfortable than before in the boardroom. Ms Kusama spreads out her fingers so the bandages will pull tight and puts on 12oz gloves, a weight equivalent to holding a can of beans in each hand for up to an hour at a time. She has been boxing for about a year, but the first time she went into the ring she was torn between aggression and traditional expectations of femininity. "I really wanted to hit the guy. Hard. I didn't want to stop. Then after I hit him I'd say 'sorry', and he'd say 'don't be sorry' — that's the object of the game."

She finds the men in the gym — some of them former and reigning world champions — are fairly respectful since they see women suffering the same workout and maulings as they do.

Ms Kusama is keen to set up some amateur fights with other women — or men — in her weight range. "It's as much about defence as being aggressive and if you stop concentrating, you're going to get hurt. It hurts most in the face," she says, pointing to the unprotected front of her helmet, "and the gut. And the breasts, but really only if you have premenstrual syndrome." Some women fighters wear fibre-glass breastplates, but the edges can dig into the chest on impact. As for facial injuries, models like Ms Coleman can lose work because of a black eye, but she also gets extra work in commercials because she can box.

In a city obsessed with size and fitness, the body which results from a boxing workout is coveted. Ms Howes, 34, says that as an instructor taking eight exercise classes a week at her Crosby Street Studio, she thought she was in shape. "But this was a whole different level of fitness. The whole shape of my body has changed and I've got much longer, leaner muscles in my arms,

rather than the overblown ones you get from lifting weights." Boxing can also fulfil psychological needs. "Sure, the type of woman coming here has, deep down, some aggression and a need to compete, but we're not big, old angry dykes. We are stronger, faster, more co-ordinated and have a much longer aerobic capacity." Ms Howes' workout at Gleason's is overseen by the former world champion Carlos Ortiz. No longer in the first bloom of youth, he likes sparring with women for exercise without serious injury. "Although sometimes," he says, nodding over at Ms Howes battering the speed ball, "she will hit me in the stomach and I'm in pain for three days."

Mr Silverglade does not find it surprising that women have suddenly fallen in love with boxing. After all, boxers were always the underdog coming up. "First there were Jews, then Italians, then blacks and now Hispanics becoming boxers. Women are the final minority."

Vicar's life is no longer black and white



Mr Hobson: take me as you find me

A talk on "The Language of Clothes" at Birmingham Cathedral, to which the assistant Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt Rev Michael Whinney, invited his clergy and parishioners on Monday was abruptly cancelled because of media interest. The lecture was to have been given by Jane Farndon, an image consultant and a family friend of Bishop Whinney. But the question of whether members of the clergy should be concerning themselves with how they present themselves has become an issue for unofficial debate within the Church of England. "I'm sorry, he [Bishop Whinney] lost his nerve," says the Rev Michael Stagg, communications officer for the diocese of Norwich. "If we took the thing seriously it's about valuing ourselves, and I don't think the clergy as a whole is good at that. I've been on courses with nuns — mostly Roman Catholics — and I believe there are things we can learn. There are all sorts of ways we communicate, and although what is inside the parcel is most important that doesn't mean we ignore the wrapping."

Do people want ministers to be style-conscious and trendy? It is obviously a touchy subject

Clergy in the West Midlands are coy about whether they would have attended. The Rector of Solihull, Canon Peter Hawkins, is typical. "We've got to be careful not to get into the warp of being vain," he says. "That seems to me to be a sin. I don't think people want trendy clergymen."

One cleric who will admit to having visited an image consultant is the Rev Mark Dearnley. A curate in East Croydon, he saw a colour consultant four years ago and in summer can be seen on his bicycle or BMW motor cycle in shorts and pink, turquoise or denim blue clerical shirts and dog collar. "It seems too restrictive to wear just black and white," Mr Dearnley, 34, says. "You're supposed to be bringing a message of good news, and black and white doesn't go with my colour scheme, since I'm a 'spring flowing into summer' category who should wear light, bright, warm colours."

The presence of over a thousand ordained "lady deacons" in the church today has encouraged clerical outfitters such as Wippell's to bring in shirting fabrics in pink and mint green for both sexes. Wippell's head office in Exeter does a brisk business in brown shirting, explains Alan Porter, manager of the London branch, "because of country parsons in tweeds. And the Church of Scotland loves blue."

The Rev Rob Marshall, spokesman for the Bishop of London, shares a commonly held view that "Evangelicals wear blue, Anglo-Catholics black and liberals grey." But he hopes clergy style will move on. "More and more dioceses are offering basic image courses," he says, "and the Bishop of London is very aware of the need for the church to make itself look user-friendly. I advise clergy appearing on television on how to present themselves —

and that usually means looking as conservative as possible, avoiding jazzy sweaters and always wearing a dog-collar, even though some say that makes them look like Daleks."

The Rev Peter Hobson, rector of Hackney Marsh parish, who favours blue jeans and multi-coloured jumpers, says: "I think I've got more important things to get on with doing in my ministry than to worry about my appearance. I wear mostly blue — yes, I'm evangelical. I might be interested in an image consultant if they were going to help enhance individuality. If they had a brief from a conservative-minded bishop I wouldn't."

Bishop Whinney says: "I'm very sorry it's got out of hand. It was meant to be a bit of fun, to help all of us in making some of the less solemn choices in life. It had nothing to do with what the clergy should wear in church." He says he has not yet had a professional consultation with Ms Farndon, and adds: "I was looking forward to it."



Mr Dearnley: taking a little advice

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Alan Coren



■ Why has the InterCity swallow flown its nest, and abandoned Keith's BR tie?

Keith has just had a nasty turn. Keith has received a piece of really bad news. It has plunged Keith into gloom, and gloom is not something into which pursers should be plunged. Pursers are supposed to be smilingly assured men, men in confident charge, men hair-triggered to cope with anything a capricious fate may throw at them. It is pursers towards whom fraught travellers turn when the egg smells funny or the iceberg looms, when the ankle twists or the porthole jams, when the passport vanishes or the denture cracks. If your spouse falls overboard, if the runaway hearse in the upper bunk grows restive, if the head comes off the clockwork Nefertiti you bought on the Alexandria waterfront, ring for the pursers. He will sort it out.

Now, you may argue that there is not a lot of this on the London-Leeds InterCity, but Keith could tell you a thing or two, and if you are lucky enough to be travelling alone so that Keith can take the weight off his feet for a minute, do you realise he walks nine miles during the Leeds-London run, he has these special aerated wossnames in his shoes, he will. But today, he is only going through the motions with his anecdotes of Dennis Waterman and Ede Pollard and the time everybody ordered the braised beef and this peer of the realm, what was his name, you'd know his face, wouldn't he, palmed off with the haddock and threatened to pull the cord; today, what Keith really wants to talk about is his tie. And he is going to. It is no use your pointing out that the loud bassoon has just blown and the bride begun her altarward progress, you are going to hear the story of Keith's tie. And the reason he is desperate to get the story off his chest is because British Rail want to get the tie off it.

It is a special tie. It is a burgundy tie with silver swallows on, and Keith has been proud to wear it ever since InterCity adopted the diving swallow as its corporate logo in 1987. It matches not only the swallow on his badge, it matches the swallow on the engine and the swallow on the rolling-stock, whereupon you say yes, and it matches the swallow on the crockery as well, doesn't it, and Keith cries that is exactly the point, that is the point exactly! And then you stare at him, because you do not have the faintest idea what the point is exactly, or even roughly. So Keith tells you, and the story actually does become quite interesting.

For Keith's tie is no longer matches the crockery. The crockery does not have a swallow on it any more. Nor does the cutlery. Nor do the menus. Nor does anything else in InterCity catering, except Keith's tie, and he has just heard that it, too, will have to go. That is because his swallow not only matched all the other InterCity swallows, it matched all the swallows employed in the logotypic service of the Swallow Hotel group. And when it was brought to the attention of Swallow Hotels that BR was using their swallows, rage swept through their ranks. Quite why they did not wish to be associated with British Rail, who can say, especially as it was not the whole of BR from which they wished to be dissociated, only BR catering, which you probably find even more puzzling, but that was the top and bottom of it. The middle of it, mind, teems with even more questions, such as why BR did not know in 1987 that Swallow Hotels had established a prior claim to the service mark, or what has become of all the crockery and cutlery and all the rest which BR were required to replace, but since these are not questions to which I am able to provide an answer, I shall return to the case of Keith's tie, where even greater imponderabilities lurk.

For while Keith has to give up the tie he loves, his non-catering colleagues do not. BR conductors and ticket-collectors may still wear the swallow, so may the engine; so may the coaches. But Keith can't, because Keith is deemed to be in the same business as Swallow Hotels. This saddens Keith. Keith says his tie has class: it identifies him with the prestige InterCity service. He is getting a new tie, possibly with a lion on it, but it will not be the same.

As for me, while I of course worry about Keith, he is not all I worry about. I use BR often, and often while I am using it I find myself, for one reason or another, worrying about whether it has the first idea what day it is.



Rebels without a cause

The government's self-defeating tactics on the Maastricht bill range from the odd and reckless to the downright crazy

Politics seldom matters in government. Politics is froth, carnival, noise. It has its seasonal fiestas, its general elections, ministerial reshuffles, "upstarts in the House". It mesmerises the press and hogs the airwaves. It is narcotic to the masses. But sound government goes about its business, sometimes stirred, rarely shaken.

Not at present. As of Monday, politics is to enjoy a period of manuring, as it did in 1976-79. Britain has a *de facto* minority government. The stoats and weasels have for some months been flitting darkly in the shadows outside Toad Hall. Now they are inside, crawling all over the place, swinging from the chandeliers and whooping with glee. The smiles on the faces in the press gallery as the government went down to defeat on Monday told all. We are in for some crude fun.

Minority governments are bad governments. They are governments that cannot do business without negotiating with parliamentary groups who refuse to accept party whipping or collective responsibility. The Monday vote and subsequent statements by the Maastricht rebels show that they will not vote with the prime minister on a matter that he has made one of personal confidence. And they are more numerous than the government's notional majority.

Some wheeler-dealing has always been integral to managing cabinet business. Recent concessions on regional mental cuts and hospital closures are evidence of that. Wise ministers keep their backbenches up to date and sometimes toss them a bone of concession. But there is a world of difference between such subtle bluff and openly defying a three-line whip. Nor is the present revolt confined to Maastricht. Similar defiance occurred over pit closures. There may be more over leasehold enfranchisement, over tax increases, even over public spending (in so far as it requires legislation). A new Sunday trading law has been all but abandoned for fear of revolt.

To America's founding fathers, a little rebellion now and then was a good thing, a safety valve of democracy. But rebellion against a particular leader should not become a habit of mind or his authority to deliver on his promises is lost. There is a difference between occasional one-off defiance and systematic and sustained dissent on a central item of policy. Such dissent becomes a party within a party. One rebel, Sir George Gardiner, pleaded yesterday

that he still supported Mr Major on most issues. But Mr Major does not want *à la carte* friendship. Like Lord Melbourne, offered support "as long as you are in the right", he needs it most "when I am in the wrong".

Minority governments usually survive important votes. They do so with the undignified bribes to minority parties seen in 1978-79 and again on Monday night. But it turns cabinets into cowards and makes governing a pain in the neck. Of all the events to bring us to this is the Maastricht bill, the most crashingly dull. As a party-splitter, it has none of the historic passion of home rule or the

partners in the last five years — lies in low labour costs and a relatively efficient welfare state. Free of the social chapter and with a floating currency, Britain is ideally placed for long-term recovery, on the fringe of an increasingly corporatist continent. Maastricht may be rotten, but not necessarily rotten for Britain.

Not to ratify would be to disintegrate the treaty. The outcome would not be the *status quo ante*. It would be a series of multilateral deals outside the Treaty of Rome, France-Germany, Benelux, Germany-France-Iberia. These would reflect the existing imbalance of economic power, largely in Germany's

Simon Jenkins

favour. There is a virtue in some collective framework of European political action however imperfect. There is a virtue in a commission to police European free trade and enforce a modicum of competition.

The elites of Brussels may be fat cats of dubious loyalty who have monstrously abused the cause. (Their latest *folie de grandeur* is "the highest tower in Europe" to replace the Berlaymont palace, a sure sign of imperial hubris.) But it is one thing to cut such elites down to size, another to shatter the consensus on which important agreements have been built. Destroying Maastricht risks throwing out babies with bathwater.

This treaty should be behind us, a waffly coda to the Euro-politics of cold war. What is odd is that as its European star has waned, it has come to obsess British politics ever more fiercely. Why is it hard to discern. Having been so active in renegotiating the treaty, Mr Major could hardly ratify it. There was a good case for an early referendum, not out of principle but, like all British referendums, out of expediency. He would have won it and sent the stoats and weasels skulking back to their lairs.

Mr Major was lulled in early 1992 by his success. He postponed ratification until after the election and left it a hostage to fortune, which meant to a smaller Commons majority. And to the

possibility that he himself might lose popularity. That has now happened. The rebels on Monday were not voting on their principles. They were voting against Mr Major and mean to go on doing so. That they can continue to accept his whip with honour is extraordinary.

Across Europe the Maastricht Chestnut is dissolving on the branch. But its riches of a grin continues to haunt Downing Street and deface its judgment. Monday's fiasco made no sense. The clause insisting that members of the new European council of the regions be nominated by the whips — yet more of Mr Major's love of patronage — was bound to antagonise Labour and Liberals. Not to predict this at the time of drafting was odd. Given likely defeat, to make its passage a confidence issue at the weekend was reckless. Not to withdraw the clause on Monday but rather invite defeat seemed crazy.

The cabinet at present does not carry the bearing sufficient to appear noble in defeat. Monday's tactic was based on some Downing Street hot-house theory about "putting the heat" on the rebels through the 1992 committee and the constinencies, to "teach them a lesson". But Mr Major's party managers make poor imitations of Tammany Hall.

Mr Major will get his Maastricht bill eventually. Rebels do not invite elections, nor will Labour or the Liberals vote Maastricht down. The only question is how much humiliation the prime minister engineers for himself in the process. Last Monday suggests quite a lot. It was not a black day said Mr Hurd, turning the phrase in his mind, "not black but a pale shade of grey". He had about him a certain detachment. He looked like a man with one foot in the memoirs. I feel sorry for Mr Hurd. As he scans the world horizon he sees every important foreign government in disarray, France, Germany, Italy, Japan. If only he and Mr Major had ratified together behind them a year ago, they could be the towering figures they seemed when Mr Major chaired the G7 in 1991. They could be leading the nation against a novice Clinton team. They could be a rock of sanity against Balkan adventurism, against the collapse of Gatt, for a single market, for inclusionism in eastern Europe.

As it is they got beat in the House of Commons for a mess of worthless Euro-patronage. If only they had earlier lifted their eyes unto the hills. If only...

Taking the slow road

Ian Lang defends his constitutional plans for Scotland

With the approach of the general election a year ago, I was determined to push the constitutional issue to the top of the agenda in Scotland. Two events conspired to help me. First, Magnus Linklater, editor of the *Scottishman*, invited me to debate the issue with the other three Scottish party leaders. Second, a rogue opinion poll contrived to claim that half the Scottish electorate favoured independence.

I didn't believe that for a moment. Nor did I believe that, if they could be persuaded to focus on the issue in any detail, Scots would want to start down that road with the Scottish parliament offered by the Labour and Liberal parties. In the event, we won back support and seats with the Union elevated during the general election, both by the prime minister and by Douglas Hurd, "to the heart of the campaign." We proclaimed ourselves "unqualified" unionists — and "that we remain".

But what was clear during that period was that, whether justified or not, there was a sense of unease and remoteness among many people in Scotland. We promised to take stock with a view to addressing that after the election.

The strength of the unwritten British constitution, its organic nature, its ability to change and move with the times, is often rightly proclaimed. But for Scots, an important piece of paper on which part of it is written down is the Act of Union of 1707. Significantly, some institutions and areas of Scottish life were specifically protected and enshrined in this otherwise integrationist document. Not for us the no-nonsense French approach, where every piece of soil annexed to their empire became a department of France.

Arguably, the signatories of the Act of Union got it wrong. Had Scotland been fully integrated then, it is suggested, we would not have the constitutional problems of recent years. If that is so, then the fault-line runs right back to 1707, but it is a fruitless exercise to speculate on how all the developments since then might have been so different.

The Union would not have survived — or even been brought about in the first place — had not Scottish parliamentary representation been guaranteed, and Scotland's distinctive legal, educational, and local government systems been protected by the 1707 Act.

Those who suggest now that the best way to secure the future integrity of the United Kingdom is by eliminating all territorial distinctions in government have also got it wrong. Union does not mean uniformity and never has done. No one designing a constitution from scratch would create the strange, unbalanced and unique nation state that forms the present United Kingdom, but that is not how most nation states come about. We are the prisoners of our history. To unpick that history now would be to break up the nation. The past may be a foreign country where they do things differently, as L.P. Hartley claimed, but we need to understand it in considering the future.

The creation of the Scottish Office in 1885 and of the Scottish grand committee, the Scottish standing committees and the Scottish select committee over the years since reflects the adoption within the government and parliament of the Union, of the mechanisms which enable that diversity to be accommodated.

My changes fall entirely within that context: a tidying up of some administrative responsibilities — why should the Scottish arts be funded from London? And a wider opportunity to secure the democratic accountability of the executive, but all within the powers of, and answerable to, the unitary Westminster Parliament. As Enoch Powell once rightly observed, that which is devolved must be retrievable. Scottish MPs may find they have an increased workload, but not increased power.

Writing in *The Spectator* a few weeks ago my colleague, John Patten, pressed the evolutionary nature of constitutional change in Britain. Rolling — almost glacial — change is the right way for our constitution to provide stability, yet remain up to date. My reform proposals fit into that category. Change also needs a continuing commitment to the underlying principles that give an evolving constitution coherence and consistency.

Cynics might claim there is only a semantic difference between crude opportunism and principled pragmatism. I believe there is all the difference in the world. Mr Patten quoted the 17th-century Lord Falkland: "When it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change." He might equally have chosen the 18th-century Alexander Pope: "For forms of government let fools contest; Whichever is best administered is best."

Both have relevance today. Scotland needs no separate parliament; no break-up of Britain; no dramatic gesture or appealing gimmick. It needs good government and sound administration, with the load-bearing walls of our constitutional framework intact and the integrity of our unitary Parliament unbreached.

If we have the confidence in the Union to find new ways to reflect the needs of all its parts, our United Kingdom can approach the fourth century of Union renewed in strength and at greater ease with itself.

The author is secretary of state for Scotland.

A private treaty?

THE Welsh Nationalists and the government are unlikely to lobby-fellows. So how was it that the four Plaid Cymru MPs duly followed most of the Tory party into the Aye lobby on Monday night? The answer, it is being suggested, is the close personal friendship between John Major and Dafydd Wigley, president of the Welsh Nats.

Many Labour MPs suspect that it was this relationship that secured the guarantee of Welsh representation on the council of the regions, and the government's commitment to create a Welsh forum, in exchange for Plaid Cymru's ultimately less than crucial votes.

Wigley has been Major's pair in the Commons since 1979, when he first became an MP. Such is the warmth of the relationship between the two men that Wigley was one of the few non-Tories to be invited to Downing Street to celebrate Major's victory in the Tory leadership contest in November 1990. They have regularly shared a glass of whisky since.

Only last year, Wigley sparked off a rebellion in the valleys after persuading the prime minister to give a life peerage to Dafydd Elis

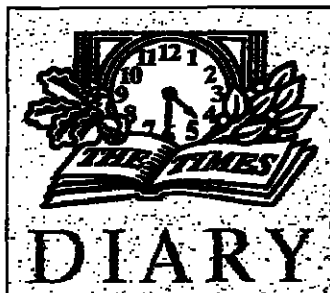
Thomas, who stood down as party president and MP at the election.

Wigley, who was not available yesterday for comment, left Iwan Wyn Jones, the MP for Ynys Mon, to take the predictable flack. "The deal had nothing to do with Dafydd Wigley and John Major. Their friendship does not come into it," he said. "The deal was struck because it was best for Wales. It was done through the usual channels."

Flat rate

NOT even the best address in London is protection from the recession, it seems. The selling-price of a flat opposite Kensington Palace, the London home of the Princess of Wales, has been reduced by almost £8 million.

The penthouse, at 3a Palace Green, was heralded as the most expensive flat in Europe when it was first offered for sale at £13.5 million two years ago. Now its developer, Regalian, has chopped the asking price to £5.6 million, while a further 17 flats in the new block of 21 apartments have also been drastically reduced. The cheapest flat in the block, which



was originally offered at £2 million, is now priced at £795,000 — still a Porsche or three above most Londoners' flats.

Meltdown

FALLOUT from the Royal separation continues. Madame Tussaud's is said to have abandoned plans to include smiling and waving waxworks of the Prince and Princess of Wales in its spectacular new £10 million development, "The Spirit of London".

The model couple had been expected to feature as the centrepiece of a carousel which tops off the exhibition, due to open in May. The Spirit of London is housed in Tussaud's newly extended basement, and will offer visitors the chance to journey in a mock London taxi through a his-

tory of the capital. Moving and speaking dummies will be used for the first time, while special effects will recreate the sights, sounds and smells of London's history.

Museum sources say the Prince and Princess of Wales would have been among those to wave to visitors at the end of their journey. But the official line is that the couple were never going to be on the carousel. "They are already in the ball, so we wouldn't want them here as well," says a spokesman.

Baroness Thatcher can rarely have had a better day than Monday. Having spent all day filming Thatcher: The Downing Street Years, she heard the news of the government's defeat as she and Sir

Denis departed for a night at the Royal Opera. There the Thatchers enjoyed the first night of La Damnation de Faust, just as her successor began contemplating the possible cost of selling his political soul to Maastricht. To top it all, Faust spends much of the time singing to "Chère Marguerite".

Family values

THERE was a conspicuous absence from yesterday's lunch party for Rosamund Richardson's *The Long Shadow: Inside Stalin's Family*. Svetlana Alliluyeva, the only daughter of the former Soviet dictator, who lives in London, stayed away, despite having co-operated fully with the book, which traces the effect Stalin's regime had on his family.

Alliluyeva's absence was all the more pointed since two of her relations — Kyra and Olga Alliluyeva, Stalin's niece and great-niece — were present. And, as Richardson explains in the book, it was Alliluyeva who first persuaded them to be interviewed. Her antipathy towards Richardson. "She just turned around on me. Suddenly I got a letter from her attacking me and the book. It was a wild tirade, saying I was not fit to write the book."

Richardson, says last time they met Alliluyeva gave her "a certain

Stalin look. If that had been her father I would have ended up with a bullet in the back of my head."

Family values II

LATER this month, Sotheby's is to sell 140 paintings by the natural history artist Archibald Thorburn. The collection comes from Cornwall's Thorburn Museum, which is run by curator John Southern, a man who clearly does not believe in keeping it in the family. His son, Graham, is the specialist in modern British pictures — at Christie's.

Southern senior says he is fond of Christie's, "of course", but insists the decision was purely business. "Christie's view was that the collection should be sold over three or four years in sections. Sotheby's was prepared to arrange one sale. I considered my link with Christie's, but one has to look at the overall position." Excluding this year's birthday card, presumably.

Having lost a safe councillor's seat last week because of allegations of corruption within Lambeth council, the ruling Labour party cannot be looking forward to the next local by-election, in Bishops ward. Their candidate starts with a disadvantage. His name is Matthew Swindells.





A NECESSARY REVOLUTION

Shielding the old guard is no way to modernise Italy

At some point in almost any revolution, the overruling class is tempted to try to stop the unruly rolling, generally in the name of maintaining order. The ill-judged "political" to Italy's corruption scandals, imposed by its prime minister, Giuliano Amato, belongs in that forlorn tradition.

The package of decrees and laws announced last weekend, aimed at enabling thousands of corrupt politicians, civil servants and businessmen to escape prison, reveals how far Italy's old order is out of touch with the new public mood. The country's new heroes, its magistrates, objected that the new laws would paralyse their investigations. The public saw a conspiracy by the powers that be to save their skins. President Ciriaco De Mita sensibly declined to sign the decrees. The government should think again. Signor Amato, who has shown unlooked-for tenacity in tackling Italy's appalling state finances, tax and welfare systems, has been a right advocate of political reform. But the judicial investigations have widened the threat to thousands of politicians, bureaucrats and industrialists across the land, he is taken fright. He argues that unless misdemeanours such as illegal contributions to party funds are treated more leniently, so many will be indicted that the country will be paralysed, trials will drag on for a decade or more and the judicial and prison systems will collapse.

The dilemma is not imaginary. After years accepted, institutionalised law-breaking, most of the entire society is guilty, at least by socialisation. Every sector of economic activity at every level of politics has been infected by bribery and extortion. The mayor of almost every great Italian city has resigned, if the councillors in some towns are in prison and some government offices are empty that they barely function. Yesterday a chairman of the giant state energy company, ENI, joined the rapidly growing list of courtiers in Italy's most powerful communities who have been indicted or arrested. But Signor Amato's logic is faulty: it is the times, not the punishments, that impair Italy's ability to function. ENI alone paid

£675 million in bribes between 1970 and 1980, according to its finance director during those years. A Turin institute estimates the total cost of corruption at £4.4 billion a year. When the support for cleaning house is at its height, it was unbelievably crass to announce a decree to "decriminalise" the endemic illegal financing of political parties and substitute fines for jail sentences — and make it, moreover, conveniently retroactive. Even more suspect is another proposed bill to introduce plea-bargaining and suspended sentences for those suspected of bribery, extortion and receiving stolen goods — crimes for which Signor Amato's old colleague, the former Socialist prime minister Bettino Craxi, is under investigation.

Since nearly a quarter of the country's 630 MPs, including some of Italy's most prominent politicians, are under investigation for illegal party financing or more serious crimes, merely to ask parliament to approve these measures — as the government still plans — would be plainly insufficient. Carlo Ripa di Meana, Italy's environment commissioner, has resigned in protest, insisting that justice must take its course "to reconcile the people with their institutions". His advice should be heeded.

Disgust with the governing class, already evident in last April's national elections before the extent of the scandals became public knowledge, is dangerous for any democracy. Italy's postwar stability, bought at too high a price, cannot be assured by protecting its old guard. Electoral reforms deep enough to change the political system, and the political caste, are the key to the future. These will, thanks to reformers such as the Christian Democrat dissident, Mario Segni, be put to voters in referendums next month. Fresh elections can then be held. In these turbulent times, Signor Amato can be no more than a caretaker. There may be a case for special tribunals to expedite investigations: if so, Signor Amato should invite the judiciary to make proposals. Beyond that, he should stick to his courageous economic reforms, and abandon any thought of meddling with judicial process.

NEW RIGHTS TO PROPERTY

Leasehold reform should not be opposed by Conservatives

ouble in the Lords is the last thing that the government needed yesterday. But the housing and urban development bill, which would force thousands of landlords to sell leased properties, appears to many of their supporters to strike at the heart of the Tory doctrine of property. The sensibly practical arguments in its favour have been obscured by the lobbying of interest groups and — strikingly — by the pitched battle to defend the ideological probity of the Conservative party against state interventionism. The bill would enable 750,000 holders of leases to buy freeholds from their landlords compulsorily, and thus benefit the institutions of several of the MPs who have been conspicuous in its defence. On the other side of the freehold fence, landlords such as the Duke of Westminster, who owns much of Mayfair and Belgrave, and Lord Adgey, who owns 100 acres in Chelsea, have made their case with equally predictable vigour. Aristocratic pique has already even the duke to withhold donations from a traditional party of property.

The intellectual case against the bill is more persuasive than the angst of those who and to lose from it. Conservatives are rightly hesitant to intervene in property markets, especially when intervention means retrospective breach of contract. For Tories who believe in the sanctity of private contracts, therefore, the measure is a crypto-socialist attack on Locke's most sacred principles and an affront to the rule of law. Appealing as these arguments may be to defenders of the free market, the lordly beliefs are being intransigent in their

principled resistance. In practice, no society can afford to treat private contracts and private property as absolutely inviolable. In markets in which ownership is highly concentrated, governments rightly interfere with the untrammelled enjoyment of private property in the name of competition. Land ownership in central London has been a case of monopoly power, especially during the mid-Victorian period when Britain's system of long leasehold tenure became the norm.

For better or worse, the principle of forcing freeholders to sell their property to long leaseholders was established by the 1967 Leasehold Reform Act. That law excluded flats, but only for reasons of administrative complexity. The new bill merely removes that anomaly. Parliament must ensure that the compensatory mechanism which accompanies it is just and carefully regulated. The powers of the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal, which judges disputes over compensation, should be increased accordingly.

Intervention in private contracts is justified only when there is a clear public interest and the prospect of a shared social benefit. This law would redress an anomalous distinction between the owners of flats and houses. It would be consistent with the government's long-term drive to create, in Lord Lawson's phrase, "a nation of inheritors". The bill would also enhance competition by fragmenting local landholding monopolies and bringing liquidity to the housing market. This measure has triggered a healthy bout of Tory soul-searching; but it is truer to modern Conservative principles than its detractors claim.

WATERS BOILING OVER

Fishermen and bureaucrats have never taken to each other

ea fish are different from other natural foods. Because they are among the last wild things left on Earth, it seems odd that they are truly belong to anyone until they are caught. To cut down other men's olive trees or burn their crops is to invade what is theirs. To fight over fish seems natural to that wild and marginal trade.

Fishermen have been squabbling since the first nets were lowered into the Sea of Galilee. The earliest contacts between English and French were over fishing, and they were seldom friendly. For Scottish fishermen to board a Russian factory ship in Peterhead and pour diesel oil on its catch was an unpersuasive way to teach Russians the benefits of the rule of law and free markets. But then it has long seemed that life is made up of rules, EC rules and EC rules about fish. It is no disrespect to marine conservationists to suggest that there are hidden hallows in all attempts to control the catches. Like chaos theory, the piscatorial process can never be fully learnt. Fishing and regulation are naturally opposed notions.

Until recent over-fishing, the depletion of fish stocks and consequent attempts at political regulation, the high seas were free, and it was a self-evident axiom that there were as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it. That proverb died. If there is anything more complex, wasteful and difficult to enforce than the EC's common agricultural policy it

is its less notorious common fisheries policy, with its zones and national quotas for 100 species of fish and total allowable catches.

It produces such nonsense as British fishermen being sentenced to non-fishing days while foreign fishing boats are on the horizon catching "our fish", and half the fish caught in the North Sea being thrown back dead because they are over quota or below minimum landing size. And this is a policy supposed to conserve stocks.

Yet the attempts of the past ten years to regulate the unpredictable and unruly trade have had some successes. There are still too many fishermen chasing too few fish in Europe's circumscribed waters. But the haddock has made a dramatic comeback in the North Sea, allowing its quota to be doubled; and there is a revival of the northeast Arctic cod, cause of the glut of cheap Russian and Norwegian imports.

In the long haul the ideal policy would be to reduce Europe's fishing armadas so drastically that unrestricted fishing, perhaps by licence, and certainly with wider meshes, could be allowed again. Instead of these artificial quotas and windows of fishing opportunity that are difficult to police and chafe the naturally free spirit of fishermen. That is unlikely to happen. In the short term, a certain amount of tension, turbulence and rough competition with other fishermen is, as usual, to be expected.

Emotion clouding Maastricht view

From Mr Robin G. Hodgson

Sir, I write as the chairman of the West Midlands area of the Conservative party, in which lie the parliamentary seats of Messrs Cash (Stafford) and Budget (Wolverhampton South West) as well as a number of other Euro-sceptics. I am not concerned with the rights and wrongs of the government's European policy but I am concerned that less than 12 months ago volunteers in Stafford, Wolverhampton South West and elsewhere worked hard to ensure that the Conservative party held these seats.

Many of us in the West Midlands now feel that the argument over Maastricht has moved beyond rational discussion into the realm of pure emotion and that in this febrile atmosphere Euro-sceptics are in danger of failing to listen to and appreciate the relative priorities and concerns of their constituents.

In such circumstances consideration of desecration should not lead to "martyrdom" as you suggest in your leading article, "Illusions of unity" (March 8). If proceeded with it would, in fact, be the expression of the will of the very people who enabled Messrs Cash and Budget to return to Westminster in April of last year.

Yours sincerely,
ROBIN HODGSON,
Chairman, West Midlands
Conservative Council,
18 Milverton Terrace,
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.
March 9.

From Dom Antony Sutcliffe

Sir, I was saddened to read (later editions, March 9) of "loyalist" Conservative MPs attacking their dissenting colleagues... for being "unprincipled" in voting for the Labour amendment yesterday in Parliament. For once, perhaps, MPs are actually being principled by voting for their beliefs and not for a party line. As a result our young people, about whom we hear so much adverse comment, might at last respect the personal honesty and integrity of some of our politicians.

Faithfully,
ANTHONY SUTCLIFF,
Downside Abbey,
Stratton on the Fosse, Bath, Avon.
March 9.

From Mr Richard C. Green

Sir, You tell us that there should be a referendum about Maastricht (leading article, March 9). What you have not told us is how the question should be worded so that all of us could make an informed decision on the way to vote.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD C. GREEN,
The Whittem Farm Ltd,
Lyonsdale, Kingston,
Herefordshire.
March 9.

Deal with nationalists

From Mr Denzil Davies,
MP for Llanelli (Labour)

Sir, To try to avoid defeat in the Commons last night over the proposed European committee of the regions the prime minister sought a deal with the Scottish and Welsh nationalist parties.

Some of us have always been led to believe that the Conservative party was the party of the Union of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The nationalist parties exist to destroy that union.

The government sat down with those who oppose the British Union in order to preserve the Treaty on European Union. Are we now to conclude that for a majority in the modern Conservative party the European Union takes pride of place over the British Union?

Yours sincerely,
DENZIL DAVIES,
House of Commons.
March 9.

From Mr Gerald Kaufman, MP for Manchester, Gorton (Labour)

Sir, There is an important lesson to be learned from the squalid deals, unsuccessful though they were in avoiding defeat for the government, with which the Conservatives bought Scottish and Welsh Nationalist votes (report, later editions, March 9) in Monday night's Commons division on the Maastricht treaty bill.

Under proportional representation such deals would not be occasional excrescences but everyday events. Proportional representation would bring not government by the people but, rather, government by the back-door manoeuvre and the under-the-table bargain.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD KAUFMAN,
House of Commons.
March 9.

Sitting and thinking

From Mr John Gaze

Sir, I have always referred to taxi tip-up seats as "dickie" seats (Daniel La Noue's letter, February 25) and have always rather liked using them.

I remain, Sir, yours sincerely,
JOHN GAZE,
F2 Albany, Piccadilly, W1.

Libraries know tricks of the trade

From the Chief Executive of the Library Association

Sir, Your leading article on public libraries (March 2) seems to me to perpetuate outdated stereotypes. Most libraries have long been using the "tricks" that you suggest they could learn from Waterstones: indeed, it seems likely that these ideas came from libraries in the first place.

You are quite right, however, to point out that public libraries are increasingly unable to emulate the best bookshops by staying open long after office hours. With the savage cuts to their funding that they have had to endure over the last decade and more it would indeed be a trick if they could.

Yes, we blame "the cuts" for this as you suggest, but despite them public libraries do still aspire to the ideal you propose of empowering the masses. Open access to education, information and literature, as offered by public libraries, is one of the keys to a civilised and democratic society. It is essential that they get all the support they need in order to achieve it.

Like Valerie Grove ("Borrowers and lenders we must be", March 5), I wish that commonsense solutions would prevail. Unlike her, I do not believe that volunteers, charges and donations will enable public libraries to continue to be part of the "fabric of life". That would merely be fiddling at the margins.

Yours sincerely,
ROSS SHIMMON,
Chief Executive,
The Library Association,
7 Ridgmont Street, WC1.
March 5.

Growing fear of muddle over medals

From Mr J. R. Havers-Strong

Sir, I fear that the abolition of the British Empire Medal will mean that many individuals whose contribution to the welfare of the nation has been worthy but unspectacular will be considered insufficiently deserving of the MBE and will be deprived of an award.

The highest awards for valour, both military and civilian, have always been made without regard to rank or class; but where personal courage alone is not the only criterion and where the level of responsibility of the recipient may vary, as for example between a battalion commander and a platoon sergeant, this, together with the effect of the action attracting the award, must be related to the seniority of the award granted. This should apply equally to civilian life.

Further, it is important that the honours system be divorced from the immediate influence of the political party in power and of the Opposition. An advisory board should be set up to receive all submissions and to place their recommendations before the Queen. A suitably constituted board would eliminate the controversial and dubious awards made for "political services".

Yours faithfully,
J. R. HAVERS-STRONG,
Rivendell, East House Fields,
Icklesham, East Sussex.
March 8.

From the Headmaster of Cranleigh School

Sir, Any judge who required a knighthood to preserve his independence (letter, March 8) should not be on the Bench. The prime minister's apparent suggestion otherwise is surely offensive to the standards of the judiciary.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY HART,
Headmaster, Cranleigh School,
Horseshoe Lane, Cranleigh, Surrey.

From Mr David Rees

Sir, Will peerages be offered to former prime ministers only on the basis of their achievements whilst in office?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID REES,
St Anne's College, Oxford.

Freehold doubts

From Mr Michael Watson

Sir, Among the few glories of London not shared by any other European capital are the residential squares and crescents controlled by the larger estates and built in the early to mid-19th century.

It would require only one newly enfranchised freeholder to express his passion for surprise pink, another to hang out his washing and a third to defer external painting for a few years to reduce the value of one's own newly acquired freehold to well below its present value as leasehold premises.

In the neater regions of Bayswater one sees that, despite a similar architectural heritage, residential squares have been reduced to a shambles through lack of control. What an irony it would be in this age of environmental concern if this well intentioned leasehold reform bill (letters, February 4, 15; March 2, 4, 9) caused the disintegration of some of the finest housing stock in central London.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL WATSON,
105 Onslow Square, SW7.
March 9.

From Mr Philip Jones

Sir, The timing of your leading article could scarcely have been more insensitive, coming as it does at a time when many public librarians are in immediate danger of losing their jobs. You acknowledge (unarguably) that "more money would help". But you go on to say that libraries could do more to halt their "declining trend". What, pray? To what is this declining trend attributable if not to lack of resources, reduced opening hours and corresponding loss of public support?

You suggest that libraries should open longer hours. I am sure that local authorities up and down the country would love to know how this laudable aim can be combined with making cuts of several million pounds.

You suggest that public libraries emulate bookshops and "display books of all sorts attractively in different sections". Have they not been doing just that for 20 years or more?

Your final paragraph addresses one valid argument that has long raged in public libraries: should libraries provide books to educate, to entertain, or both? The irony is that the underlying implication of your argument — that librarians should elevate the masses by providing what they ought to want — is not very far removed from the attitudes of those authorities that have decided that racist and sexist books should not be stocked.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP JONES,
2 Innes Lodge,
Inglemere Road, SE23.

From Dr Joan Macintosh

Sir, You report (March 6) that the extra ten High Court judges the Lord Chancellor intends to appoint "will automatically receive knighthoods". Why should it be assumed that no dames will be created?

Yours sincerely,
JOAN MACINTOSH,
Wynd End, Auchtermadar, Perthshire.
March 6.

From Mr A. B. Badenoch

Sir, Is it really appropriate for the government and opposition parties to spend so much time debating the trivia of the honours system when there are over three million unemployed?

Yours faithfully,
A. B. BADENOCH,
16 New Bridge Street, EC4.
March 5.

From Mr John Chapman

Sir, With the prime minister retaining the right to award political honours the lyrics of W. S. Gilbert in *Ruddigore* are still relevant: Ye supple MPs, who go down on your knees,

Your precious identity sinking,
And vote black or white as your leaders indicate
(Which saves you the trouble of thinking,
For your Country's good fame, her
repute, or her shame —
You don't care the snuff of a candle —
But you're paid for your game when you're told that your name
Will be graced by a baronet's
handie.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN CHAPMAN,
12 Old Square,
Lincoln's Inn, WC2.
March 5.

From Mr Derek Heady, CMG

Sir, When everyone is MBE, Then no one's anybody.

I remain, Sir, your obedient,
Gilbertian servant,
DEREK HEADY,
Roofree Cottage,
Hoby, Melton Mowbray,
Leicestershire.
March 8.

Science and wealth

From Dr P. H. Sugden

Sir, I regard as irrational Dr Terence Kealey's analysis (letter, March 1) of the Institute for Scientific Information's report on the scientific productivity of the world's cities (details, February 13). Scientific productivity was expressed as the number of scientific papers produced annually by ten given cities. Such measurements are meaningless unless related to the number of practising scientists in each city.

No effort was made to rank the quality of the publications. A rough guide of quality is available by applying "impact factor" ratings to the journals in which the papers were published. In science, quantity is not equivalent to quality.

Dr Kealey presumes Moscow to be perhaps the poorest city (presumably in terms of economic activity?) and Osaka the richest. He did not present any data to support this.

Although interesting, the ISI report should be taken with a very large pinch of sodium chloride.

Yours faithfully,
P. H. SUGDEN,
38 Beech Road,
Purley-on-Thames,
Reading, Berkshire.
March 2.

Resting place for Pavlova's ashes

From Mr Trevor Turner

Sir, As Robin Young rightly says ("Russia asks for Pavlova's ashes", report, March 5), the major part of Anna Pavlova's wonderful career was in Britain.

We should therefore retain her ashes in this country, where her career was established and where so many benefited from her artistry and were her devoted admirers.

Yours faithfully,
T. TURNER,
78 Elm Park Road, SW3.

From Mr Keith Money

Sir, Anna Pavlova's anguish at the revolutionaries' treatment of her was intense; she was banned from Russia and her financial gifts to poor artists were misappropriated by the authorities. Since she has no traceable relatives, the request for her ashes is purely nationalistic.

One would like to suggest, on her behalf, that she might consider "going home" when Lenin departs Red Square. Not before. She loved her London home deeply and the choice of Golders Green was perfectly fitting. In Russia she loved the district of Ligoovo best, and unless the authorities are suggesting swapping Golders Green for Ligoovo it is difficult to see the latest request as anything more than Russian imperialism.

For the record, the great dancer was born in 1881, not 1885. Her appearances at the Palace Theatre (for Alfred Butt, not Diaghilev) began in 1910 with Mikhail Mordkin, not Nijinsky, with whom she appeared for a handful of performances at Covent Garden the following year. Her career was cut short by pleurisy rather than a heart ailment, and she died surrounded by doctors.

Yours faithfully,
KEITH MONEY
(Author, *Anna Pavlova: Her Life and Art*, 1982),
Carbrooke Hall Farm,
Theford, Norfolk.

Into the siding?

From Mr Kenneth S. Solly

Sir, Unlike your correspondent, Mr P. A. Hearne (March 2), I feel the logo of the level-crossing warning sign should be retained as an epitaph to the golden age of steam, when it was a pleasure to travel on the railways and trains were normally on time.

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH S. SOLLY,
9 Ravens Road,
Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex.

From Mrs B. A. King

Sir, A suitable warning sign would depict a 125 express bearing down at speed on a very small motor car.

Yours faithfully,
BETTY A. KING,
Crescent House,
31 North Road, Hertford.

From Mr John W. Deeley

Sir, How about a strip of railway track — underneath an axe?

Sincerely,
JOHN W. DEELEY,
16 Downs Road,
Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

From Mrs Helen M. Vince

Sir, Might I suggest a mound of leaves?

Yours faithfully,
HELEN M. VINCE,
8 Birchwood Drive,
Lightwater, Surrey.

From Dr P. Glaister

Sir, Whatever type of locomotive is depicted, a carriage full of standing passengers is surely a must.

Yours faithfully,
P. GLAISTER,
3 Ginstow Road,
Earley, Reading, Berkshire.

From Dr N. G. B. Hersey

Sir, Fiddle-faddle, Mr Hearne — and you a scientist! Any British five-year-old asked to draw a train will almost certainly depict Thomas the Tank Engine, whose popularity remains undimmed after half a century.

Replace our beloved level-crossing signs? Mr Hearne, the Fat Director wants to see you at once!

Yours faithfully,
N. G. B. HERSEY,
2 Great Churchway,
Plymouth, Plymouth.

From Mr William Barrett

Sir, Has Mr Hearne not noted that children are still commonly drawing Second World War aircraft?

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM BARRETT,
Pip's Peace,
Kenton, Stowmarket, Suffolk.

From Mr T. B. Gorse

Sir, Ask any primary school teacher what the children draw when asked to draw a locomotive: it will not be a diesel!

Yours faithfully,
T. B. GORSE,
15 Kinloch Drive,
Heaton, Bolton, Lancashire.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

Generators invited to sell plant or risk MMC

Power generators are on probation for two years, facing a reference to the monopolies commission if there is not greater competition by 1995

By Ross Tieman, Industrial Correspondent

THE head of electricity regulation has invited Britain's two big generating groups to sell some of their power stations, talking of "widespread concerns" about their dominance of electricity production.

The suggestion, from Professor Stephen Littlechild, was seen within the industry as a coded warning that unless the generators do more to speed the development of competition, they may face a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Professor Littlechild insisted the generators might find it in their own interest to sell some of their plants. "A major generator wishing to reduce its exposure to the domestic electricity market could find attractive the sale of plant, which is viable and which is not scheduled for closure," he said.

Insisting that a number of "credible organisations" could be interested, he said: "Some of the widespread concerns about generator dominance could be alleviated if voluntary sales of plant were to prove possible."

National Power, which last year had a 40 per cent share of the power market in England and Wales, said it would consider any "serious offers" for viable plants. PowerGen, which controls 26 per cent of the market, declined to comment on the invitation.

Professor Littlechild's remarks have again focused attention on the dominance of National Power and PowerGen, privatised three years ago, over power markets in England and Wales. Power prices have risen, despite steady falls in coal prices, while would-be competitors have been forced to build new plants, invariably using gas.

Both generators have seen

their market share fall since privatisation. They have come under pressure from the state-owned nuclear sector, whose output has now risen to 20 per cent of power production in England and Wales. In addition, imports from France and Scotland have risen and new gas plants are coming on stream.

But instead of falling under the pressure of competition, electricity prices are rising to help pay for building power stations. Insufficient fragmentation of power generation before privatisation has also contributed to the cuts in coal consumption, which, along with efficiency gains, underlie British Coal's plans to shed 30,000 miners.

Public pressure and a string of problems with the functioning of power markets have already prompted stiff criticism of Professor Littlechild for failing to take a tougher line. He has put the generators on probation for two more years, warning that he will refer them to the monopolies commission if he is not satisfied with the progress towards competition by 1995.

Professor Littlechild's comments about scaling down market share, his toughest yet, were attached to a report on capacity closures being implemented by the generators. The generators are planning to close all or part of 11 plants by the end of this month, reducing capacity in England and Wales by about 2,700 megawatts, or 5 per cent.

The study by Oftec, the regulatory body, concluded that closures were justified, but found the generating companies had made no effort to sell the plants, either to would-be operators or property developers.



Finding a new path: Christopher Sporborg, left, chairman of Hambro Insurance Services Group, and Nicholas Page, managing director, yesterday launched the pathfinder document with which Hambro Group, the banking concern, is to float off 50 per cent of HIS.

The company, which comprises four specialist insurance businesses, will be floated through a placing and intermediaries offer to raise £35 million. HIS made pre-tax profits of £7.1 million in the nine months to end-September 1992, and is forecast to make £9.4 million for the full year. The shares will be priced on March 23 and the company is expected to have a market capitalisation of more than £80 million.

Of the placing proceeds, existing shareholders in the four businesses will receive £20 million. HIS will receive the £15 million balance, boosting net asset value to £20 million by eliminating £3 million of borrowings, leaving the company with net cash of up to £7 million. Hambro is retaining 50 per cent of HIS, Mr Sporborg said.

Restructuring costs £92m at Hillsdown

By George Sivel, City Editor

HILLSDOWN Holdings, the food and furniture group, yesterday charged a £92.3 million extraordinary item for restructuring to its 1992 accounts, the last occasion on which such a move is possible before companies have to report under the new FRS3 reporting standard.

The charge covers withdrawal from parts of Hillsdown's red meat business, the cessation of property trading and includes a provision of £56.2 million to cover future losses.

Pre-tax profits at Hillsdown fell from £186.8 million to £154.1 million in the year to end-December because of recession, falling food prices and trading down by consumers to cheaper items.

A total maintained dividend of 8.8p a share will be paid, as a sign of confidence in the future. It will cost £61.5 million, most of which has had to be withdrawn from reserves.

Shareholders' funds fell from £1,016 billion to £872.9 million because of a further £103 million of goodwill written off on acquisitions.

Acquisitions have been a hallmark of Hillsdown's progress under Sir Harry Solomon, the outgoing chairman, but Sir John Nott, the new executive chairman, said yesterday there were "no acquisitions in the pipeline."

Sir John said "the time has come to pause... we must continue to strengthen cash flow but less exposure to, but not exit from, commodity-type business." Poultry is being reorganised to reduce the proportion of frozen birds and the tea operations will be merged with the beverage business.

Sir Harry will continue as a non-executive director. Sir John is looking for two more to join him.

Tempos, page 27

Enterprise rises on N Sea find

By Colin Narborough

A SURPRISE report from Statoil, the Norwegian state company, that it has made one of its biggest North Sea oil and gas finds in recent years, gave Enterprise Oil shares a 10p boost to 507p yesterday.

Enterprise, the British exploration company, has a 10 per cent stake in the exploration licence for the new field in the Nordland II area of the Norwegian continental shelf. The Norwegian petroleum directorate said a well drilled in block 6608/10-3 showed that a reservoir was bigger than expected.

The directorate said it was too early to say anything for certain about the size of the find, but provisional estimates showed that it could be about 50 million cubic metres of oil, or 315 million barrels, plus 10 billion cubic metres of gas.

Enterprise's annual results are due out on Thursday. A small dividend increase in forecast.

Year of mixed fortune for confident Glynwed

GLYNWED International reports that 1992 was a year of mixed fortunes, but adds it is confident enough about prospects that, for the second successive year, it will pay an uncovered dividend. Group pre-tax profits rose from £25.5 million to £33.1 million, and operating profit from £40.9 million to £44.8 million, on a turnover of £906.4 million (£949.9 million). Net earnings advanced from 8.43p to 10.95p a share. The final dividend is held at 7.5p a share, making an unchanged 11.65p a share total for the year.

There is an extraordinary charge of £3.6 million (£9.5 million) relating to reorganisation and redundancy costs. The return on capital was 15.5 per cent, up from 12.4 per cent achieved in 1991. Gearing rose from 39.2 per cent to 40.5 per cent. Gareth Davies, chairman and chief executive, said Glynwed had achieved higher levels of profitability for four successive half years and was aiming to maintain that trend in 1993. The shares eased 5p to 284p.

RBS denies allegation

LORD Younger, chairman of the Royal Bank of Scotland moved to deny allegations that it was planning to pay a £400 bonus to staff who levy maximum charges on customers. The bank was attacked by the Labour party for its Performance Plus incentive scheme last week. Lord Younger and other senior managers of the bank met Nigel Griffiths, Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, to correct "untrue or misleading claims" made in the Commons about the bank's charges.

Etonbrook in talks

ETONBROOK, a property company with no borrowings and £2.4 million cash in the bank, is in talks that may lead to an offer from Andrew Perloff, a shareholder who controls 29.9 per cent of the company. Mr Perloff has also asked the company to convene an extraordinary meeting to consider the replacement of Jonathan Harris, the chairman, and five other directors by himself and two associates. A previous attempt by Mr Perloff to remove Etonbrook's directors was defeated last year. Since then, he increased his stake in a tender offer and acquired a block of shares.

BASF dividend cut

BASF, the German chemicals group, cut its 1992 dividend to DM10 from DM12 after net profits fell 41 per cent to DM615 million (DM1.04 billion). Yearly pre-tax profits to end-December fell 41.3 per cent to DM1.24 billion (DM2.11 billion) on sales of DM44.5 billion (DM46.62 billion). Parent net profits fell to DM770 million (DM884 million) on DM18.56 billion (DM20.4 billion) sales and pre-tax profits fell to DM1.12 billion (DM1.49 billion).

GPG considers bid

GPG, Sir Ron Brierley's investment and broking group, confirmed it was "contemplating making a full offer" for Brown Shipley Holdings, the investment and broking group. Any bid would rival an agreed offer from Kredietbank Luxembourg (KBL), BSH's 29.8 per cent shareholder, which has offered 30p a share for the group. The first closing date for the KBL bid is tomorrow. GPG took its stake in BSH to more than 22 per cent on Monday.

Heinz profit warning

HEINZ, the American food group, has issued its first profit warning for more than a decade. Wall Street wiped almost \$380 million from the group's value after it said full-year profits to April were not expected to reach a previously forecast \$660 million. Heinz put the figure closer to \$635 million. Net income for the first nine months dropped 7 per cent to \$460 million on sales up almost 8 per cent to \$5 billion. The shares dropped \$1.5 to \$43 by lunchtime yesterday.

Truck sales 'to fall'

THE European truck market will drop by about 15 per cent to 220,000 units in 1993 from 260,000 in 1992, said Shemaya Levy, managing director of Renault Vehicules Industriels, which suffered a net consolidated loss of Fr1.62 billion in 1992 after a Fr23 million profit in 1991. He said sales in the second half of 1992, added to those in the first half of 1993, would equal something less than sales in the first half of 1990 alone.

Archer buys underwriter

AJ ARCHER, the quoted Lloyd's underwriting agency, is to buy Castle Underwriting. Archer is offering shareholders in Castle, a members' and managing agency, 12.5 million new shares, representing 33 per cent of the enlarged group's capital base. Archer said agreement for the acquisition has been reached in principle. The shares were untraded, staying at 40p. Archer has a £200 million 1993 underwriting capacity and Castle has a capacity of £190 million.

Wates City plunges £75m into the red

By Carl Mortished

WATES City of London Properties has plunged to a loss of £74.9 million from a profit in 1991 of £8 million after a £72 million writedown on the value of its portfolio.

The size of the provision surprised the market and the shares were marked down 14 per cent to 39½p. The losses have badly hit Wates' balance sheet: net asset value is halved to 74p per share and the company is unable to pay a final dividend. Wates made an interim payment of 0.77p per share in October.

John Nettleton, finance director of Wates, said the fall in

values was due to a complete lack of confidence in the City market. But he added that any improvement in the economy would help City rental levels where there is a limited choice of larger buildings.

Income from rents rose 5 per cent to £15.8 million in the year to December but interest costs rose from £3.9 million to £6.7 million. Borrowings were unchanged at £91 million but gearing now exceeds 100 per cent after the writedowns. Wates has extended the maturity of its debt with a five-year facility replacing a multi-option one expiring next year.

De Beers slides to \$757m in 'tough year'

By Colin Campbell, Mining Correspondent

DE BEERS, as indicated last August, has cut its 1992 final dividend. It comes after a year when equity accounted profits fell from \$1,068 million to \$757 million to leave net earnings at 199 cents, compared with 281 cents a share previously.

The year's dividend for the combined companies that separately hold the diamond group's South African and non-South African assets is cut to 79.1 cents (112.1 cents). This is only the second dividend cut in a decade, and only the third in 48 years.

Julian Ogilvie Thompson, chairman, and other De Beers directors speaking from Johannesburg yesterday, said



Ogilvie Thompson: quotes

the smuggling of rough gem stones out of Angola and de-stocking of polished stones in Japan, coupled with weaker Central Selling Organisation sales, had contributed to make

1992 a tough year. The group took steps to stabilise the diamond market and in September production quotas were introduced. Russia was abiding by these, De Beers said, adding that Russian production, which had fallen 25 per cent in 1992, was expected to fall a further 15 per cent this year. Russia, which has the ability to market 5 per cent of its own rough production, had not sought to undercut the Antwerp market, though some Russian stones had "seeped" into the open market, Gary Ralfe, a main board director, said.

The CSO's first two diamond "sights" of 1993 had been "very good", and consumer attitudes to diamond jewellery remain positive. But European markets are sluggish and in Japan falling imports and retail diamond sales "give reason for concern". The attitude of the Clinton administration towards a tax on luxury items was "not helpful".

Mr Ogilvie Thompson said he was encouraged by the strength of retail markets in the rest of east Asia, and was enthusiastic about prospects in China where the advertising spend is being increased within an overall annual promotional spend that will rise from \$1.64 million spent in 1992.

Mr Ogilvie Thompson gave no forecasts, and added details of talks with the Namibian government on the CDM mine would only be publicised in a joint announcement.

Tempos, page 27

Candover advances

CANDOVER Investments, the management buyout specialist, reported a 4 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £4.1 million and a 9 per cent rise in net assets per share to 267p, in the year to end-December.

The final dividend has been lifted from 6p to 6.5p, making a total for the full year of 10.25p, up from 9.5p last time. Earnings per share advanced 12 per cent to 13.7p.

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Close Brothers to pay £19.1m for Winterflood

By Patricia Tehan

CLOSE Brothers, the merchant bank, is to pay £19.1 million for a 90.5 per cent stake in Winterflood Securities, Union Discount's smaller companies market-maker.

The sale is likely to be earnings-dilutive for Union, which has been forced to sell Winterflood in order to restore its capital position. Union said it was negotiating to sell Winterflood last week when it said talks over a merger or takeover of Union had ended.

Brian Winterflood, who founded the company, and other managers will retain their 9.5 per cent stake, though they will benefit from improved share option and bonus schemes from Close.

After the acquisition, the management's bonus entitlement will rise by 5 per cent of Winterflood pre-tax profits of up to £5 million. The acquisition values Winterflood at £20.6 million.

Close is financing the deal with the proceeds of a £12.3 million placing and open offer of 5.5 million new ordinary shares at 315p a share and

£1.8 million in cash. The share offer compares with Monday's 340p closing price. Rod Kent, Close's managing director, said the acquisition does not mean the bank has a hidden agenda to move further into the securities business.

He said Winterflood is different from market-making in the big company shares and he expects the acquisition to be earnings-enhancing for Close.

Union announced the sale as it disclosed pre-tax losses of £16.3 million for 1992, reduced from £23.6 million in 1991. The losses were brought on by Union's leasing and property interests.

The figure was achieved after a £10.18 million exceptional write-off made up of a £3.07 million cost of an aborted computer development, £4.74 million restructuring costs and £2.37 million relating to loans to St Andrew Securities, secured by a building in Edinburgh. There is no dividend payment.

George Blunden, the chief executive brought in last sum-

mer to turn the company's fortunes around, said the sale of Winterflood will put it in a good capital position.

Losses in discount activities increased from £2.57 million to £5.1 million, though the company said the rate of losses was stemmed in the second half. Profits were steady in the futures broking and cash management business at £824 million. Equity and gilt-edged market-making profits rose from £3.9 million to £5.75 million. Losses in the asset finance business were reduced from £16.3 million to £7.6 million.

Union's shares climbed 2p to 91p, moving more closely to reflect the company's net asset value per share of 187.9p, down from 300.6p in 1991.

Close also unveiled its figures for the six months to end-January yesterday. Pre-tax profits increased by 6.7 per cent to £6.77 million. Earnings per share were 3 per cent higher at 11.91p and the bank is paying a 6.7 per cent increase to the interim dividend at 3.2p.



Benefits flow through: Heavy cost-cutting helped, John White, left, group managing director of BBA, the automotive, industrial and aerospace products group, and Vanni Treves, the chairman, yesterday announce pre-tax profits of £47.4 million in the year to end-

December, compared with £30.9 million. Redundancies and reorganisation cost the company £9.7 million. Sales rose 5 per cent to

£1.3 million. The dividend is again 7.5p, but remains uncovered by fully diluted earnings per share of 5.06p (1.91p). Tempus, page 27

Low & Bonar to buy Kellogg's offshoot

By Martin Barrow, City News Editor

LOW & Bonar, the international packaging and plastics group, is to buy Kellogg's Cereal Packaging business in Britain for £33.5 million.

The acquisition is to be funded from the proceeds of a one-for-four rights issue, raising £50.2 million. The balance of the proceeds will be used to develop carton activities and reduce debt. New shares are being offered at 265p each. The acquisition was well received in the City and existing shares rose from 335p to 348p.

Cereal Packaging, based in Manchester, is Britain's fourth-largest carton manufacturer. Low & Bonar has entered

into a long-term contract to supply Kellogg's with a minimum volume of cartons, specifying prices that will be indexed and adjusted to reflect changes in raw material costs. Cereal Packaging earned operating profits of £5.2 million in 1992 on turnover of £30 million, restated on a pro-forma basis to indicate what results would have been under new pricing arrangements. Assets on completion will be £8 million, subject to the results of a stocktaking exercise.

Low & Bonar said the combination of Cereal Packaging and Bonar Cooke Cartons will create the third-largest company of its kind in Britain.

Ocean Group to sell subsidiary

OCEAN Group, the freight, distribution and environmental services group, is set to raise £55 million through the sale of its bulk liquid storage division (Jon Ashworth writes). The company also expects to maintain its total dividend at 14.33p.

Royal Pakhoed of Rotterdam is paying about £41 million for the non-UK subsidiaries of Panocean Storage & Transport, subject to a completion audit. Pakhoed has also assumed debt of £14 million, taking the value of the deal to £55 million. The proceeds will be used to reduce borrowings.

Panocean's UK business is still for sale. Ocean's shares rose 8p to 294p.

Festive season brings cheer to Thorntons

By Jon Ashworth

GOOD Christmas sales helped Thorntons, the luxury chocolate maker and retailer, turn in steady interim profits in spite of higher interest charges and the cost of launching a new range.

The company made pre-tax profits of £7 million (£7.2 million) in the half-year to January 9 on turnover of £54.3 million (£50.4 million). Earnings per share were 7.38p (7.53p). The interim dividend is held at 1.25p a share.

Christmas sales were up 8.3 per cent on last year in spite of a late start. Thorntons relies on Christmas for 30 per cent of its sales, with about 25 per cent coming over Mothering Sunday and Easter. John

Thornton, the chairman, said operating margins were reduced by start-up costs relating to the new Select range of chocolates. Nine months from its launch, Select now accounts for 6-8 per cent of total sales.

Mr Thornton said more money was being spent on advertising. The annual budget has been increased by £750,000 to £3 million.

Thorntons opened 30 new UK outlets, taking the total to 442. Two shops were opened in France where £5.3 million (£4.6 million) in sales was recorded.

Sales in January and February were mixed, but Valentine's Day was a highlight. The shares fell 8p to 202p.

Writedowns hit S&F profits

By Our Banking Correspondent

SINGER & Friedlander's results took a £10.1 million hit from a writedown in the value of properties held for investment, sending pre-tax profits for 1992 down to £6 million from £15.5 million in 1991.

The merchant bank also expects a writ claiming damages of £8.6 million from the government over the company's role in connection with Barlow Clowes' bid for Buckley's Brewery in 1987.

Last May, S&F received a claim for £40 million from the trade and industry depart-

ment in relation to its role as financial adviser to James Ferguson, which purchased certain Barlow Clowes companies in 1987.

John Hodson, the chief executive, said S&F denies any liability.

After increasing the total dividend from 2.5p to 2.6p, earnings per share collapsed from 4.82p to 0.76p. Before the exceptional item, earnings should have increased to 5.86p.

Banking profits increased from £7.98 million to £9.28

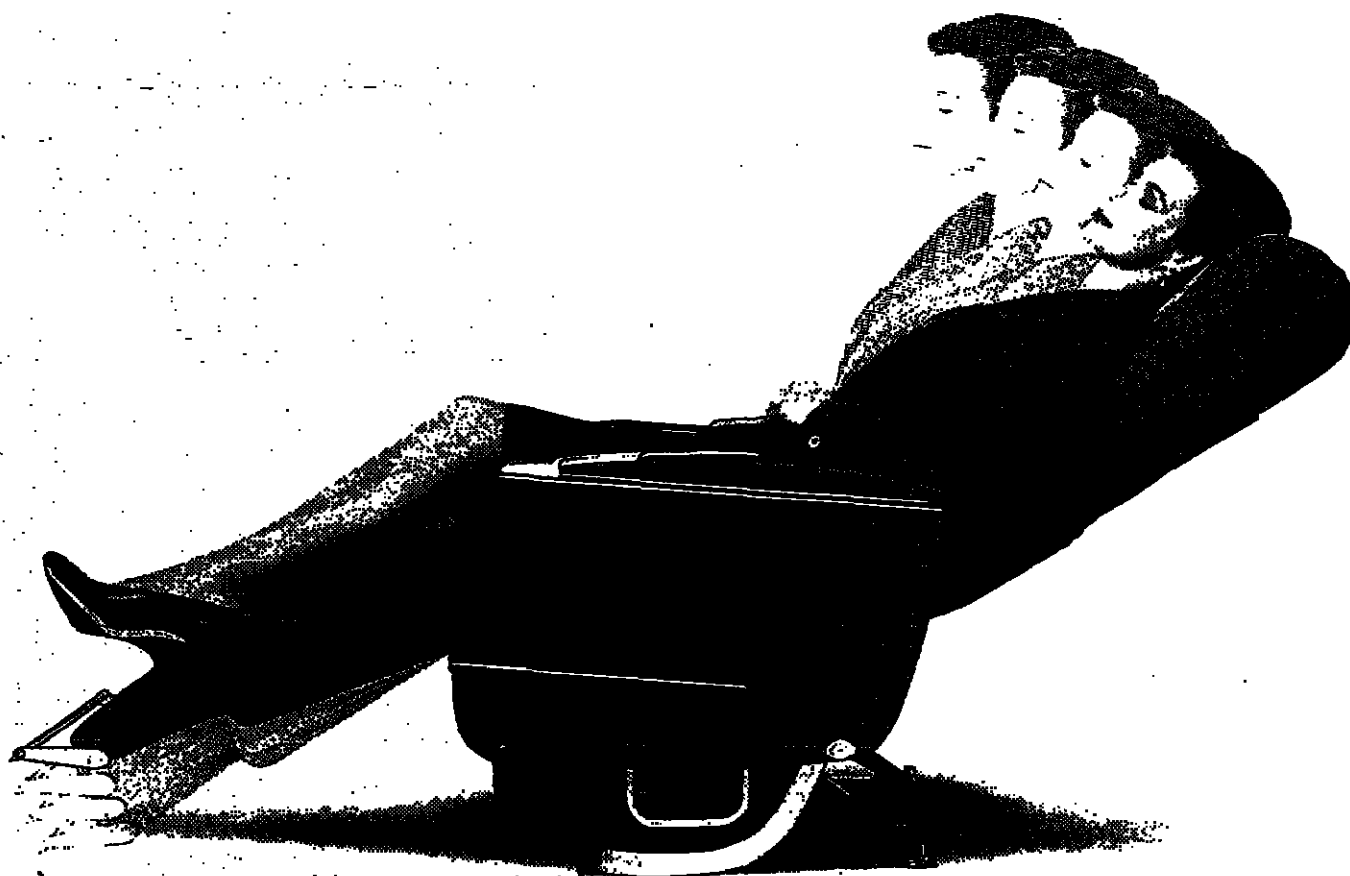
million, property profits fell from £3.12 million to £3.05 million. Interest and investment income fell from £6.8 million to £4.96 million.

Analysts expect profits to remain at the same levels this year and are looking to 1994 for the benefits of ventures into unit trusts and capital markets to pay off.

The bank said the reason for the fall in interest earnings was the £12.6 million buy-in of capital and the £3.6 million redemption of its 1.5 per cent loan stock.

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Yorkshire to reduce power bills from April

Yorkshire Electricity is cutting power bills for householders and small business customers from April. Domestic customers will see a drop in their bills of more than 3.5 per cent.

Those who pay by direct debit through the company's budget plan scheme will receive a further 5% reduction during the year. Most small industrial and commercial customers will also enjoy a reduction in their bills of about 5 per cent.

Yorkshire Electricity said that it had been able to make the cuts through its efficiency drive, coupled with effective power purchasing policies that had also enabled the benefits of lower coal prices to be passed on.

Royal Winton up for sale

Royal Winton, one of Staffordshire's leading pottery firms, is up for sale after calling in the receivers a year after workers accepted a 32 per cent pay cut to keep the company afloat. The firm, which specialises in earthenware pottery and employs 120 people, has an annual turnover of three million pounds, but has been hit hard by the recession.

A management buy-out saved Royal Winton from closure three years ago after its parent company, the Manchester-based Coleroll Group, collapsed with debts of about £300 million. Arthur Andersen, the Birmingham-based receiver, confirmed it was looking for new buyers for Royal Winton's business and assets.

Rights success at ML Holdings

ML Holdings, the engineering and aerospace company, received acceptance for 92.7 per cent of its rights issue of 100.52 million shares at 15p a share. Pamure Gordon, its broker, also placed all 7.35 million shares not taken up at a premium to the subscription price of 2.95p a share net of expenses, to be distributed pro rata to shareholders duly entitled.

Strike call

IG Metall, the German metal and engineering workers' union, said it had called on workers to stage token strikes in eastern Germany from March 31 after employers reneged on an accord for a 26 per cent 1993 pay rise. The union rejected an offer to re-open talks on the increase, which had been agreed with employers two years ago. The employers say that they cannot afford the deal.

Rally runs out of steam as the profit-takers move in

EQUITIES paused for breath after a much-anticipated bout of selective profit-taking in the wake of the recent surge, which has seen FT-SE 100 index advance by nearly 132 points, or 4.7 per cent, in the past ten trading days. Shares initially climbed to another intra-day trading high during the morning, with the FT-SE 100 index touching 2980.9 at one stage, after an overnight 64 point surge on Wall Street thanks to further signs of an American economic recovery.

But with many seasoned dealers arguing that the market is overvalued, gains were reversed after selective profit-taking. Sentiment was helped by weaker FT-SE fu-

Credit Lyonnais Laing has changed its recommendation for Tesco, down 3p to 253p, from a "sell" to a "buy". CLH has turned positive and argues that the shares have fallen too far, adding that Tesco is focusing its marketing strategy on target areas where it can reap rewards.

tures and producer price inflation figures at the top end of expectations, while political uncertainties after the government's defeat in its attempt to speed up the Maastricht ratification progress did not help matters.

A mixed start in New York did not lift sentiment in London. The FT-SE 100 index finished 7.4 points lower at 2,949.9. Volume was moderate at 776.5 million shares. International stocks with a

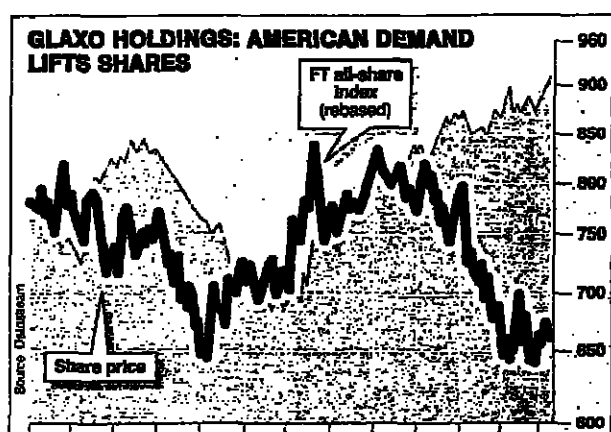


Marshall: delighted

large exposure to the US market were in demand, with ICI, whose out-of-court settlement with Barr Laboratories in America is seen to clear the decks for its Zeneca demerger, adding 12p to £12.52. Among other international, American demand helped Glaxo Holdings recover to 666p, up 14p, while Reuters gained 20p to £14.04. But weaker American depository receipts were blamed for weakness in BT, 8p lower at 433p.

British Airways fell 2p to 297p against the sluggish market, as its acquisition of a 25 per cent stake in Qantas, the Australian airline which is being privatised, was delayed and will not therefore be referred to the monopolies commission. Sir Colin Marshall, BA chairman, said: "We are delighted that full approval has now been given."

The recent spate of rights issues continued, with Low & Bonar the latest company taking advantage of the buoyant market conditions



and tapping the market. Low & Bonar rose 9p to 344p despite news of the one-for-four £50.2 million rights issue, at 265p a share, to help fund the £33.5 million acquisition of Cereal Packaging from Kellogg.

Saatchi & Saatchi unveiled hefty losses as the advertising group was driven deep into the red by a goodwill write-down of £600 million due to new accounting procedures. But investors appeared to judge that there were no particularly nasty surprises in the figures and the shares added 2p to 185p.

Meanwhile, investors were also underpinned by a largely expected slide in annual profits and provisions at Hillsdown Holdings, with the food manufacturing group's decision to maintain the total dividend helping the shares

Standard Chartered lost 8p to 691p ahead of tomorrow's results. Euro Disney jumped 65p to £10.80, although the company said the shares were running ahead of themselves. Analysts expect second-quarter losses of FF750 million.

Meanwhile, Owners Abroad, at the centre of the takeover battle, slipped 1p to 140p as some in the City appeared to take the view that Thomas Cook's move to offer 150p a share for a 12.5 per cent stake was too little, too late. Airtrics, which is bidding £285 million for Owners, eased 2p to 325p.

Close Brothers edged ahead by 4p to 344p on confirmation that the merchant bank is buying Winterfood Securities, the smaller companies market, making an arm of Union Discount for £19 million. Union Discount rose 2p to 91p.

Guinness Peat Group confirmed it was considering making a counter-bid for Brown Shipley, up 4p to 40p. Brown said GPG was thinking of making an offer of not less than 35p a share, above the 30p a share currently on

the table from Kredietbank Luxembourg. On Monday, GPG acquired 2.37 million Brown Shipley shares at 35p a share, raising its stake in the investment management group to 22.3 per cent. If GPG is to make an offer, it would have to be at a level of at least 35p a share.

Asia, up 1p to 69p, is tipped by many to be included in the FT-SE 100 when the steering committee meets today for its latest quarterly review. English China, which some say will be replaced by Asia, eased 1p to 469p.

Among others in the reserve list for FT-SE inclusion are GKN, up 4p to 485p, MEPC, 2p firmer at 378p, Wm Morrison Supermarket, down 3p

Hanson eased 5p to 257p as Barclays de Zoete Wedd advised clients that the stock is "fully valued", against a previous "hold" stance. BZW is also downgrading its 1994 pre-tax profit forecast from £1.275 billion to £1.195 billion, blaming higher interest charges among other items.

at 169p, SG Warburg Group, 10p lower at 624p, and Wincor-Nixdorf, 58p, Yorkshire Food made a bright debut in first dealings, with the shares, placed by Pamure Gordon at 110p, jumping to 145p before closing at 138p.

Bass ended unchanged at 593p as fears that the Chancellor will make a substantial hike in excise duties faded.

PHILIP PANGALOS

Ruhr steel complex to close

By COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

THE severe difficulties facing the European steel industry were highlighted yesterday by an announcement that Krupp-Hoesch, Germany's second biggest steelmaker, is to shut its Rheinhausen complex in the Ruhr district.

The closure, which will eliminate 2,000 jobs at the blast furnace and allied mill, will be the first affecting a complete west German steelmaking site since the second world war.

The company, which expects its total losses in steel to reach DM500 million this year, will shed 2,000 jobs at its other main steelmaking site at Dortmund in the next two years. Its response to huge overcapacity and mounting losses comes after a move by

Klöckner-Werke, a rival German steel firm, to seek court protection from its creditors in December.

Krupp-Hoesch said it had chosen to close Rheinhausen on the grounds that it would yield annual savings of DM240 million, in addition to the annual DM300 million from the merger of Krupp and Hoesch operations, which should be finalised this year. Krupp-Hoesch wants to reduce monthly crude steel output to 540,000 tonnes a month from current capacity of 725,000 tonnes.

Sir Leon Brittan, the European trade policy commissioner, said that Europe's steel problems arose more from American sanc-

tions than cheap Eastern European imports.

Leading American steelmakers, including USX Steel Group, the nation's largest, are planning to increase sheet steel prices by \$20 per ton, effective with shipments from July 4.

US Steel said the increase would lift prices by about 5 per cent, depending on the product, with the increase proportionately smaller for higher value-added products such as galvanised steel.

Published reports said LTV Steel and Inland Steel Industries were planning similar increases. Bethlehem Steel, America's second-largest steelmaker, said it was studying the price increase.

Primerica in talks to buy Shearson

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

TWO of Wall Street's leading players confirmed that they were in advanced takeover talks to create America's second-largest stockbroking firm that would produce a serious rival to Merrill Lynch, the industry leader. The deal could be valued at \$1 billion.

Primerica, the \$7 billion American financial services conglomerate, plans to buy the stockbroking arm of Shearson Lehman from American Express, the troubled charge card group, and merge it with Smith Barney, Harris Upham & Co, its own broking arm.

Both sides confirmed that they were in serious talks. The plan is the second run at Shearson that has been made in the past two years by Primerica.

This time, analysts predict the deal is likely to be concluded. Primerica is run by Sanford Weill, 59, a stocky aggressive trader whose management techniques, according to colleagues, do not come from any written manuals. Mr Weill is a former director of American Express and has a long relationship with Harvey Golub, now the charge card's

chairman and a man whom Mr Weill recruited. The deal would help shore up American Express finances and help foster Mr Weill's ambitions to be the biggest on Wall Street. Last year, he attempted to buy Kidder Peabody, the stockbroker, from General Electric, but the talks came to nothing.

Shearson and Smith Barney would have 11,400 brokers according to Merrill's 11,500, with 50 more offices than Merrill at 459, and equal Merrill's \$13.4 billion in revenue.

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Golub: Amex chairman

Dow maintains peak form in early trading

New York — Shares were higher in late morning trading as markets moved to consolidate Monday's record close on the Dow Jones industrial average. The rally is expected to continue until the end of the week.

The Dow was up 8.65 points to 3,478.07. Advancing shares led declining issues by about 180. One trader said: "We're seeing some follow-through. It would probably be nice to see the market pull back, but it doesn't want to do that. There's too much money coming into it."

Tokyo — Prices appeared to defy gravity again, stretching

the Nikkei share average's two-day gains to more than 1,000 points. The Nikkei average ended up 161.83 points at 17,848.30 after surging 868.77 points on Monday.

□ Hong Kong — The Hang Seng index ended 25.84 points higher at 6,508, compared with its March 5 record of 6,502.

□ Sydney — The market finished stronger, but election jitters held gains in check. The all-ordinaries index closed 16.6 points up at 1,633.7.

□ Frankfurt — The Dax index closed 18.31 points up at 1,713.13, the strongest since July 16.

(Reuters)

Mar 9	Mar 8	Mar 7	Mar 6	Mar 5	Mar 4	Mar 3	Mar 2	Mar 1	Mar 0	Mar -1	Mar -2	Mar -3	Mar -4	Mar -5	Mar -6	Mar -7	Mar -8	Mar -9	Mar -10	Mar -11	Mar -12	Mar -13	Mar -14	Mar -15	Mar -16	Mar -17	Mar -18	Mar -19	Mar -20	Mar -21	Mar -22	Mar -23	Mar -24	Mar -25	Mar -26	Mar -27	Mar -28	Mar -29	Mar -30	Mar -31	Mar -32	Mar -33	Mar -34	Mar -35	Mar -36	Mar -37	Mar -38	Mar -39	Mar -40	Mar -41	Mar -42	Mar -43	Mar -44	Mar -45	Mar -46	Mar -47	Mar -48	Mar -49	Mar -50	Mar -51	Mar -52	Mar -53	Mar -54	Mar -55	Mar -56	Mar -57	Mar -58	Mar -59	Mar -60	Mar -61	Mar -62	Mar -63	Mar -64	Mar -65	Mar -66	Mar -67	Mar -68	Mar -69	Mar -70	Mar -71	Mar -72	Mar -73	Mar -74	Mar -75	Mar -76	Mar -77	Mar -78	Mar -79	Mar -80	Mar -81	Mar -82	Mar -83	Mar -84	Mar -85	Mar -86	Mar -87	Mar -88	Mar -89	Mar -90	Mar -91	Mar -92	Mar -93	Mar -94	Mar -95	Mar -96	Mar -97	Mar -98	Mar -99	Mar -100	Mar -101	Mar -102	Mar -103	Mar -104	Mar -105	Mar -106	Mar -107	Mar -108	Mar -109	Mar -110	Mar -111	Mar -112	Mar -113	Mar -114	Mar -115	Mar -116	Mar 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Tardy Europe set to follow Clinton lead on energy tax

Carbon dioxide pollution has slid down the EC's political agenda. The new environment chief aims to move it back up, reports Tom Walker

Almost two years ago the European Commission proposed, to the consternation of most EC governments, that energy should be taxed to halt the build-up of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere. Since then, the idea has gone cold, but now Yannis Paleokrassas, the new Greek environment commissioner in Brussels, is helping to push the carbon energy tax back to centre stage.

The original proposal was the brainchild of Brussels' most colourful politician of recent years, the Italian Carlo Ripa di Meana. That was in the autumn of 1991, and controversy over the proposal marked the height of the EC's environment policy. Signor di Meana left Brussels to take up the environment minister's job in Italy (from which he resigned at the weekend). In the intervening months, the carbon energy tax has been quietly moved down the agenda by member states. Now someone else — in this case President Bill Clinton — has taken up the baton and looks like reaching the tape first, again calling into question the Community's credentials on the international stage.

The latest statistics on carbon dioxide emissions, which are being analysed by the commission, do not look good and the international goal of stabilisation at 1990 levels by the year 2000 appears a tall order. But, with the appointment of Mr Paleokrassas, the Community might just save some face. The new man in the commission's environment hot seat has a deep personal commitment to the energy tax and has arrived in Brussels at a time when large segments of European industry view the Clinton initiative as the writing on the wall.

Mr Paleokrassas — nicknamed "Paleokrassation" in some quarters — was generally dismissed as a lightweight on his arrival in January. But his charm and diplomacy might be enough to stop bickering between member states, especially France and Germany, over the composition of the tax. He also arrives at a time when, with the Danish presidency of the EC, generally committed to environmental measures, the ghost of Signor di Meana is stalking Brussels corridors once more.

"Let's face it, we're not making much progress," Mr Paleokrassas admits in his Brussels office. "Member states must abandon their nervousness and realise that the environment is a matter of life and death. We are doing this for our children." Mr Paleokrassas is a disarming man, speaking excellent English and insisting that his every word is on the record. A former Greek finance minister, he has all the detailed mathematics of the carbon tax within his grasp. He wants EC environment



Green man: Yannis Paleokrassas was wrongly thought lightweight

ministers to agree on the broad principle of the carbon energy tax this month; from there, he wants the tax cleared by finance ministers in time for possible governmental approval at the Copenhagen summit in June. He has little doubt that the American measure will get through Congress.

The Danes are similarly gung-ho. "The obstacles have not disappeared," Svend Auken, Danish environment minister, says, "but now that the new US administration has a completely different view of environmental tasks, it makes it possible that we can sit down and make agreements. We can put pressure on Japan and other countries to go along with us." The EC has always said it will go ahead with the tax only if its industrial partners implement similar measures.

The American tax would raise \$3 per barrel of oil-equivalent when it is intro-

duced, possibly as early as next year, and would rise to \$10 by the end of the decade. President Clinton's advisers estimate that \$20 billion will be raised initially; the estimate for an EC tax is 18 billion euros, rising to 47 billion euros by the year 2000. But, judged against the overall costs of energy, Mr Paleokrassas has calculated that the real increase in expenditure for industry might be only 0.14 per cent.

The industry initiative for a tax is being backed by a group of leading European companies, including Volkswagen, Asea Brown Boveri and Siemens. In a new policy document, they have proposed that economic and fiscal instruments are the right way to combat pollution, and that any tax should be applied to all industries, without exception.

Their views are not universally shared: at ICI's headquarters outside

Brussels, Dirk Hudig, the manager of EC government relations, rejects the energy tax as being too burdensome on industry. He claims that while price increases on petrol may be marginal, the cost of industrial heating oil might jump 44 per cent. "If you really want to make this thing work," he says, "relate it to the point of emission, to the car or the house, where it will be felt by the consumer."

Mr Paleokrassas welcomes the contribution to the debate of groups such as Greenpeace, but rejects their demands for a tax on both carbon fuels and uranium that would double prices. "Quite a lot of things we are doing today were relegated to the sphere of luxury years ago; they are putting forward much more advanced views, which opens up new perspectives."

Many governments are sceptical of the commissioner's optimism, but back home he has a good track record on the environment. As an island dweller, he hated smog-filled Athens, as finance minister in 1990, he granted a five-year tax holiday on all new cars, provided their predecessors were scrapped. In three months, 350,000 new lean-burn models were on the streets. He has also been instrumental in planning the Athens metro, and setting up Greece's environment ministry.

The commission is putting EC funds into lean-burn technology, and Greenpeace has challenged industry to produce a car that will cover 100 kilometres on three litres of petrol. VW has responded by bringing two new models forward, both of which can make the distance on four litres.

"We are going to show both at the Frankfurt motor show in September," a Volkswagen spokesman says. The two cars are a turbo-injection version of the Golf, and an "Eco" Golf, in which the engine switches off as soon as pressure is taken off the accelerator. The German car maker is also pushing ahead with plans to make its cars almost fully recyclable.

"In principle, it's clever," Gudrun Lammer, Greenpeace's EC spokeswoman, says. "But the problem is, you don't solve operational pollution — the noise, congestion and fumes caused by too many cars. It's what we call a 'greenwash' because it looks good but the problem doesn't go away."

Ms Lammer applauds the Clinton initiative on taxing energy. "We're seeing Clinton switching back to Keynesian policy, pulling the economy out of recession by fiscal measures," she says. "In the long run, we want to see the price of oil fuels doubled, and by 2010 you could phase out fossil fuels altogether. If you have to have cars — and we accept that some form of individual transport is necessary — then you can have hydrogen and electric cars. Some forms of petrol car will undoubtedly survive, but with double today's fuel efficiency."

Mr Paleokrassas says: "I think we will see real changes but these will be overtaken by new discoveries because the environment is such a vast sphere. We will keep discovering new things and we are a long way from where we have a complete chart of all environmental dangers."

TEMPUS Surreal Saatchis

LONG-SUFFERING Saatchi & Saatchi shareholders, who are likely to have to wait till the end of the decade before receiving a dividend, will be pleased that there are now only 250 executives in the group earning more than £150,000, down from 300 last year.

Executive pay is a small fragment of the reality of this outstandingly creative group to the average outsider. The 1992 profit and loss account is itself a surreal document. The £600 million goodwill write-off, an admission that the Saatchi brothers paid grotesque prices for that long list of agencies they bought in the eighties, could be interpreted as a prudent revaluation of intangible assets. It could also prove a shrewd accounting move that would ensure that future disposals have the most beneficial impact on the profits as possible.

The share price of 185p also has a surreal air. The shares are impossible to value on a yield basis, and on a net asset valuation are now worth about minus 280p each, reflecting negative shareholders' funds of £444 million. On an earnings basis, they trade on a prospective p/e of more than 50. One has to look out to 1995 before the p/e ratio is likely to fall to single figures, and that assumes the group can lift margins to 10 per cent and find an additional £100 million in revenue.

For a start, that will require healthy economic recovery both sides of the Atlantic. The company, however, says that its American business is still weak, which suggests that advertising spending will rise later in the economic cycle than previously hoped. In any case, the market is ludicrously overvaluing the group's prospects.

Hillsdown

CLEARING the decks after Sir Harry Solomon's departure at Hillsdown produced the worst set of food industry results for years. Red ink was everywhere, with a £92 million extraordinary charge to cover rationalisation costs and a £103 million goodwill write-off against reserves on last year's raft of acquisitions.

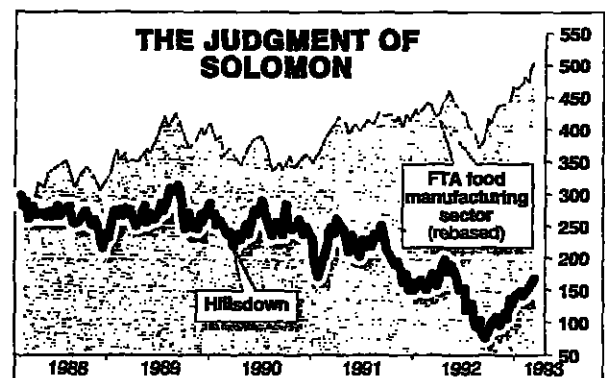
Painful as this may be, it is necessary to establish a secure earnings base for the group. The financial benefits of the steps taken so far, such as the reorganisation of the poultry operations and reduced exposure to commodity businesses, will eventually filter down to the bottom line. Profits in the coming year will be further enhanced by translation of foreign currency earnings from overseas business such as Maple Leaf Foods and the

benefits of sterling weakness in export operations.

An earnings upturn, combined with a drive to improve working capital, will have a beneficial impact on cash flow, which last year saw an outflow of £160 million. Borrowings should also improve as much of the £188 million increase in 1992 came from

one-off items such as debt securitisation and convertible bond interest.

The worst is probably over at Hillsdown. Shares trade on a prospective p/e ratio of 12, based on Henderson Crosthwaite's forecast of underlying earnings. They have had a strong run and are already well up with events.



De Beers

DIAMONDS may be the hardest substance known to man, but after the 29 per cent slide in 1992 equity-accounted profits to \$757 million, and a similar percentage cut in the total dividend to 79.1 cents a share, De Beers need nerves of steel for the uncertain times ahead.

The headaches of 1992 were the smuggling of Angolan rough gems, which De Beers bought in the millions on the open market, and weaker Central Selling Organisation sales at \$3.42 billion. If producer quotas had not been introduced in September, stocks would have been even higher than the \$731 million advance to \$3.765 billion and borrowings would have looked distinctly strained.

Production quotas should stay in place this year, which should strengthen profits as long as CSO sales perk up. Russia's production and marketing tactics are the great unknowns for 1993, and Canada is a potential irritant. If another group

beats De Beers and finds the first economic diamond fields in the Northwest Territories, then the diamond king's position could be challenged.

De Beers, always a volatile stock, now trades on 7 times prospective earnings and a 5 per cent yield. While not demanding, this is a good point to take profits, given the continuing uncertainties.

BBA Group

THERE are signs of haste about BBA's decision to swap £100 million of its dollar debt back into sterling in the wake of Black Wednesday. Admittedly, the rise in sterling value of the debt increased gearing and sterling may fall further, but these are not clear-cut reasons to mismatch the group's asset and liabilities so brutally. BBA's management may eventually wish it had paid more attention to the cash needs of the business rather than technical shifts in balance sheet ratios.

That said, the group's £229 million borrowings do not

look comfortable, regardless of currency movements. Gearing reaches 71 per cent once minorities are stripped out, compared with the group's stated upper limit of 50 per cent. Since BBA will only be cash neutral at best this year, a few disposals or a rights issue is needed to redress the balance.

BBA also has an heavy exposure to the declining German auto industry and there seems little improvement from its aviation and industrial material businesses. At 171p, the shares are already trading on 17 times this year's forecast earnings and look expensive.

Producer prices

IT is surprising the bulls did not make more of the output prices index, which shows that manufacturers are still absorbing the painful rises in input prices. The input index of only 6.9 per cent shows that deflation has been far less inflationary than feared. This should boost Treasury confidence over the next base rate cut.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Read has last laugh

NOT everyone who is made redundant gets the last laugh. But Jeremy Read, who lost his job as a director of corporate finance at Smith New Court last month, is now having a hard time wiping the smile off his face. Read, who was in charge of Allied Leisure's £12.5 million rights issue, was made redundant only one week before impact day. Allied was not pleased, and retaliated by making Smith New Court redundant as its broker. Williams de Broe, the company's financial adviser, then took over as its broker... but not before firing Read as a senior corporate finance executive.

FEW within the bounds of the City would admit to trusting the business acumen of Norman Lamont. Now, the Chancellor faces a fresh indignity. Young people would be just as happy taking savings advice from Del Boy, the widower from Only Fools and Horses, savings research from TSB revealed yesterday. Older age groups, particularly men, would, meanwhile, prefer to get their financial guidance from another well-known face on television: Sir John Harvey Jones, the BBC's Trouble Shooter and former ICI chairman.

Burning issue

A SHORT, but dramatic, fire yesterday interrupted morning trading at the London headquarters of Barclays de Zoete Wedd. All 1,500 people who work at Ebbgate House in the City's Swan Lane — coincidentally, close to the Monument, which commemorates a big-

ger fire in 1666 — were evacuated within minutes and left to mill around in the cold sunshine for about an hour. Two fire engines raced to the scene and the blaze was traced to an explosion in an eighth-floor boiler room. "We think it was a blow-back," a spokeswoman said. It is not BZW's first fire. In 1990, a stray cigarette was blamed when fire broke out in a dining room — also on the eighth floor. Presumably this was not the kind of conflagration Peter Baillie, the head of corporate communications, was expecting when he joined BZW last month with a reputation as a fire fighter.

Film set

LLOYDS Bank, which has fared rather better than its rivals throughout the recession, is now bucking another, and much longer-lasting, City trend by directing £500,000 towards Britain's beleaguered film industry. Today, it launches the Lloyds Bank Film Challenge, a youth-orientated sponsorship scheme

for young film and television writers. The six best short film scripts and TV programme ideas will be assigned a young director, and all 11-minute films will be professionally produced and broadcast on Channel 4. Patrons of the scheme are Sir Richard Attenborough, David Puttnam, Julie Walters, Jonathan Ross and Bob Hoskins. But Lloyd's has an ulterior motive: it is looking to the "youth" market to generate a future customer base. David Goldeseyne, the sponsorship manager at Lloyd's, says: "In the all-important youth market, traditional advertising is increasingly being met with cynicism. These sponsorships bring young people to us rather than the other way round."

Nott in conflict

SIR John Nott, the former conservative defence secretary and merchant banker, faces something of a personal conflict in his forthcoming role as executive chairman of Hillsdown, the food and furniture group. Hillsdown's red meat business has been bunched by a government deferment of a Brussels ruling that will keep small and inefficient abattoirs in business at the expense of Hillsdown's 12 large, efficient and expensive new ones. These are to be closed or sold. "I am actually quite critical of the government, although I can understand why they took the decision," Sir John says. "It is such an emotive issue, it would provoke such an outcry if the small ones closed." The deferral runs out in 1996, but Sir John believes the government may manage to stall the closures again.

MELINDA WITTSTOCK



"They always come up with an eye-catching idea"

Cost cutting can lead to trouble

From Mr David Howard
Sir, The subject of company annual accounts is generating much debate among accountants and analysts. Both of these professions are expert in the reductionist — and often specious — interpretation of data. Rarely do they take the wider view and examine the key issue — namely, the rate at which a company delivers added value per unit of total payroll cost. (ICI, uniquely, does present added value information in its annual reports.)

As long as markets were dominated by suppliers (from 1950 to the early eighties) profit served as the touchstone of corporate success. As markets switched to the buyer's favour in the late eighties (and it is doubtful that they will switch back again) the issue became one of cost control and economic quality — wherein lies the trap for unwary, unknowing chief executives.

Cost cutting is the main weapon in the armoury of hard pressed managers. Employees are dismissed, suppliers are pressured and customers beguiled in the effort to hold profit margins. However, the end result of all these efforts will generally be predictably greater troubles a year or so ahead. No one

would dream of trying to improve the overall performance of a car by stripping-off its bodywork. You may not be able to see the atmosphere but you know you will increasingly experience its resistance at speed.

Similarly, all human effort exists in an invisible atmosphere of loss-inducing variation. Without first understanding how the virus of variation operates, and thus diminishes most of our efforts, hasty cost cutting actually can be shown to be counter-productive.

City professionals may argue all they like about the pros and cons of FRS3 et al but the real task for the captains of industry is to raise the general level of understanding of the need, and means, to wage endless war on variation and thereby both increase the rate, and reduce the expense, by which value is delivered to their customers. In the new economic order there is no substitute for knowledge. And survival is not obligatory!

Yours faithfully,
DAVID HOWARD,
Managing Director,
Management-NewStyle Ltd,
Hill House,
20 Old Hill,
Chislehurst,
Kent.

New body to champion pension trustees

From B. Holden
Sir, In the wake of the Maxwell affair, pension trustees find themselves in the public eye. There are differing statistics on the number of occupational pension schemes. Last year, it was reported that some 170,000 schemes had been registered with the Pensions Registry at Newcastle. Perhaps, therefore, reports indicating that there are approximately 300,000 pension scheme trustees, managing some £400 billion of

assets, are not far off the mark. Most pension trustees are not professional. They are unpaid, with backgrounds ranging from senior executives to shop-floor workers. Previously no organisation was devoted to their interests. The Pension Trustees Forum was founded in September 1992 to fill this gap. Yours faithfully,
B. HOLDEN,
Secretary General,
Pension Trustees Forum,
1 Queen Anne's Gate, SW1.

Scrapping tax relief on mortgage interest painlessly

From Mr John Upshall
Sir, Get rid of the political hot potato of tax relief on mortgage interest. The tax relief is worth a maximum of £600 per annum to a household, at today's interest rate of about 8 per cent.

Withdrawal of this tax relief would cause an outcry. This can be silenced by a further small cut in interest rates, which would leave the borrower no worse off. Tax revenue of

£4 billion can be generated, and at no cost to the home-owning population. Will we see this bold stroke in the Budget on March 16?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN UPSHALL,
18 The Cornfields,
Hatch Warren, Basingstoke,
Hampshire.

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ind	offer	val	ind	offer	val
46.08	51.15	0.94	32.8	45.30	
53.1	68.6	0.62	UK Int General	42.63	45.30
55.2	56.29	0.62	Birmingham Acc	46.18	49.48
55.3	57.6	0.62	GR Int Acc	58.19	59.28
55.4	57.17	0.62	GR Int Inc Inc	21.90	22.08
55.5	57.17	0.62	N American Acc	45.70	45.70
55.6	56.79	0.62	N American Acc	362.90	362.90
55.7	57.17	0.62	UK High Inc	41.12	43.69
55.8	57.17	0.62	UK Int Acc Inc	202.02	217.60
55.9	57.17	0.62	UK Int Acc Inc	264.80	264.80
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62.2	57.17	0.62	UNITAL UNIT TRUST LTD		

	Range	Close	1 month
for March 9	2.6807-2.6927	2.6880-2.6914	1 month
100	49.11-49.37	49.14-49.24	2-13c
Argentina	91.136-9.2081	91.14-9.2081	51-10c
Australia	9.9785-9.9809	9.9785-9.9809	45-52c
Belgium	2.9890-2.9978	2.9892-2.9922	1-10c
Canada	217.84-218.04	220.1-218.04	170-175c
Denmark	169.92-170.96	170.00-170.27	155-175c
France	2378.36-2381.60	2378.36-2381.60	1-10c
Germany	1.7854-1.7961	1.7854-1.7875	171-0.04-0.10
Italy	1.4346-1.4366	1.4340-1.4350	0.37-0.38c-0.10
Japan	10.1350-10.1991	10.1350-10.1970	1-10c
Netherlands	8.0970-8.1340	8.0990-8.1090	3-10c
Spain	10.9120-10.9897	10.9120-10.9897	1-10c
Sweden	168.31-168.71	168.45-168.49	1-10c
Switzerland	16.78-16.84	16.78-16.84	21-23c
U.K.	2.2116-2.2187	2.2116-2.2187	2-10c

Premium - per DB

Australia	\$18.90-\$26.50	Germany	1.60
Brazil dollar -	11.1004-11.1186	Hong Kong	7.73
Canada	45.402-45.98	Ireland	1.40
France	6.038-6.048	Italy	1.60
Japan yen	3.75-3.767	Netherlands	1.71
Ringgit	4.43-4.53	Malaysia	2.02
S\$ dollar	2.7194-2.7239	New Zealand	1.60
Swedish rkr	5.4345-5.4705	Norway	1.05
UK pound	2.3636-2.3667	Portugal	1.81
rand (fin)	5.5070-5.518	Spain	15.3
rand (com)	4.5696-4.5769	Sweden	11.9
Telam	5.2355-5.3595	Switzerland	7.598
Bank Rates	Liquid Rate		1.33

Bank Chasing Banks & Finance Has 7			
Market Loans:	O/night high 8	Low \$	Week
Bills (Deposy):	2 mth 5% : 3 mth 5% :	2 mth 5% :	3 mth 5%

Bank Bills (Olig):	5m 5%	5m 5%	5m 5%
Money Rates:	6m 5%	6m 5%	6m 5%
Rate open S.	9/5	9/5	9/5

Liberty Depo:	5m	D/H	5%	5%
CDS	5m 5%	5m 5%	5m 5%	5m 5%
CDs	3.10-3.05	8/8	3.11-3.00	3.23-3.25
City CDs	6m 5%	6m 5%	6m 5%	6m 5%

Fixed Rate Sterling Export Finance. Make-up day: Feb 26, 1993 Agri
 1993 to April 25, 1993 Scheme II: 7.55%. Schemes III & IV: 7.75%. Refer
 1993 to Feb 26, 1993 Scheme I: 7.55%, Schemes V & VI: 6.25%.

7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth
Francs	5m 5%	5m 5%	5m 5%
Pounds	11m 11/16	11m 11/16	11m 11/16
Yen	5m 5%	5m 5%	5m 5%

Open \$327.60-328.10	Close: \$327.60-328.10	High: \$327.60-328.10
Low: \$325.50-326.40	Krugger: \$325.50-326.40	US \$225.50-326.40
Com: \$76.00-81.00 (\$25.00-50.00)	New \$76.00-81.00 (\$25.00-50.00)	
Gold: \$344.75 (\$29.35)	Silver: \$35.75 (\$7.40)	Dollars:

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No	Company	Group	Share
1	Alcan	Aluminum	100
2	Anglo	Gold	100
3	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
4	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
5	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
6	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
7	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
8	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
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47	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
48	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
49	Asahi	Paper/Print	100
50	Asahi	Paper/Print	100

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If you have ticked off your eight share in our Match The Shares game today, claim your prize by telephoning 0254 53277 between 10.00am and 5.00pm (see the Sunday Times for full details).

The Portfolio Plus prize of £2,000 was equally shared by Mr J Western of Stourport-on-Severn, Worce and Mr C Turner of Petworth, West Sussex.

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SOUL page 32

Edwin Starr: he proved a popular party leader at a marathon evening of Seventies' nostalgia

ARTS

MUSIC page 33

Howard Keel: still singing strongly at the age of 74, so farewells are not yet in order

ARCHITECTURE: Marcus Binney on the latest project of Quinlan Terry, high priest of neo-classicism

Classics first at Cambridge

For sheer beauty, the front of Quinlan Terry's new library at Downing College, Cambridge, rivals any Greek revival building in England. Here are perfect proportions designed to enchant rather than overawe.

Terry, of course, is used to all the familiar charges of replica, fake and pastiche. But, like all the best classical buildings, the Downing library is not a precise copy of anything, although every feature and moulding is carefully based on freely stated precedent.

To get the best view of the library, the exterior of which is now complete, you need to stand back some distance. From here you can appreciate the pure geometry of the design: a square plan, a pyramid roof, capped by a large octagonal belvedere. The combination of square and triangle recalls not Palladio but another landmark of neo-classicism: the director's house by Ledoux at Louis XVI's great saltworks at Arc-et-Senans.

The second subtlety of Terry's design is the picturesque way it composes with William Wilkins's original Regency college buildings and Sir Herbert Baker's matching additions. Downing's problem is that Wilkins's grand axial entrance was never built. Worse than that, the land on which it would have stood was sold off, ruling out the possibility of completing the college as Wilkins intended. The entrance to Downing, through a break in a row of shops, has always seemed a let-down. Imposing designs for a columned entrance were prepared by Baker but not executed.

Terry's library, named the Maitland Robinson Library after the building's donor, set back just inside the gates, solves the problem in a different way, drawing your eye straight to it and prompting an involuntary exclamation of delight. Terry has also taken the most domestic aspect of Wilkins's design: columns that rest directly on the ground, on the shallowest of plinths. Here is nothing of the portentousness associated with much classical architecture.

Terry calls the library a capriccio of three elements. The first is the octagonal top of the Tower of the Winds in Athens, without the carved reliefs, though with the correct names of the winds inscribed beneath the windows. The porch is taken from the Porcio of Augustus in Athens and the pimple projecting at the side, with the unusual detail of a plaster in the centre, from the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllos.

But Terry adds: "Any building like this, however correct, bears the marks of its time. Wilkins may have thought he was doing pure Grecian but today it looks unquestionably Regency. By contrast the form of the library could only be late 20th

century." A classical library of an earlier age would undoubtedly have been long and narrow, like Wren's at Trinity College, to produce maximum lighting.

At Downing, the square form was specified by the international library consultant, Harold Faulkner-Brown. Terry explains: "Faulkner-Brown has a theory that the ideal shape for a library is square. He is quite unwavering about this. It allows the readers to sit by the windows with natural light and fresh air, with the bookshelves in the centre away from the sun."

When the library opens this autumn, each student will have a carrel, a work table with high sides and backs shutting out other readers from view. These and the bookshelves have been designed by Terry.

The centre is filled with a beautiful stair-hall, lit from above, with a hanging cantilevered staircase ascending in a continuous curve around the wall. Here are exquisitely detailed classical reliefs. They have the sheen of white Carrara but in fact they are fibrous

plaster casts, with two designs repeated four times. A drawing for one of the griffins in the reliefs by Terry's son is illustrated in the excellent new monograph on Terry published by Academy Editions. "He's a better draughtsman than me," says Terry.

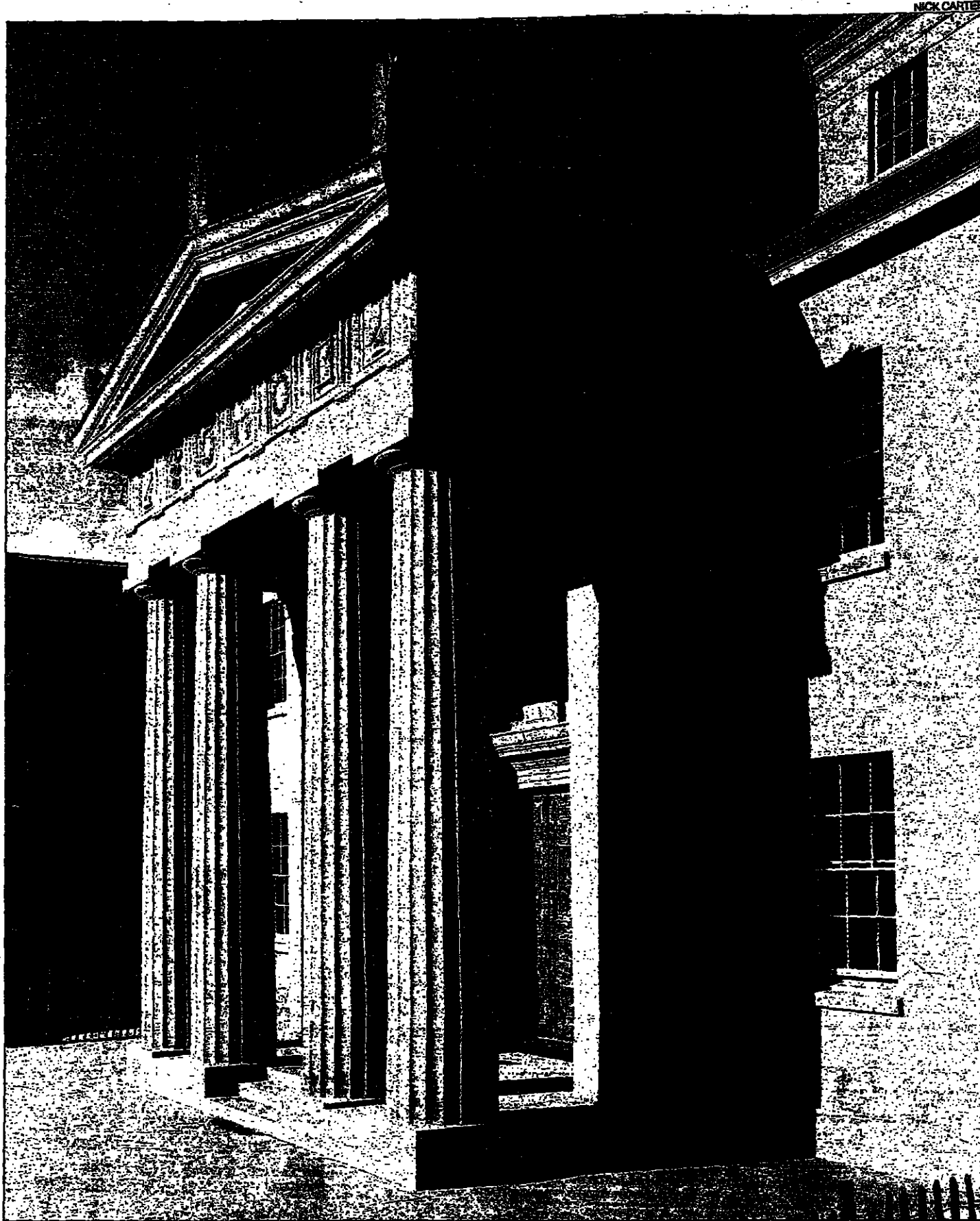
While the interiors cannot be judged till the woodwork and furniture are installed in the next few months, what does jar slightly is the way, amidst such purity and consistency of classical detail, that Terry copes with certain modern requirements. The decorative ceiling panels are surrounded by inset strip-lights, behind plastic-looking panels almost as basic as the light fittings in a typical speculative office block. But this was a budget building.

Originally, for reasons of cost, it was intended that the body of the library would be in pale yellow brick. But insistent pressure from the planners to clad the whole building in stone, combined with an unexpectedly favourable price from the builder, made it possible to face the whole exterior in the same ketton stone that Wilkins

and Baker had used. Among the many enjoyable details are the carved metopes in the frieze chosen by the dons to represent the subjects they teach. They include a Trinitarian eye over an open Bible for theology, the Tower of Babel for languages, the brazen serpent for medicine, a laurel wreath for English, DNA double helix for biology, an hourglass for history, a radio telescope for astronomy and an icosahedron (you might think it a football) for physics and mathematics.

The library is the fifth building Terry has designed for Downing. He says: "In most colleges architects start off all the rage yet end up designing only one building." So pleased are the fellows with the library that the porter confided: "People are wondering if we haven't put it in the wrong place. Perhaps it should have been the centrepiece of a new south range completing the quadrangle."

● Quinlan Terry: Selected Works is published by Academy Editions at £27.50 (in hardback); £19.95 (paperback).



"For sheer beauty, the front of Terry's new library at Downing College, Cambridge, rivals any Greek revival building in England"

CINEMA: David Robinson meets Dusan Makavejev, the veteran Yugoslav film-maker

Cue Lenin, hold the gorilla

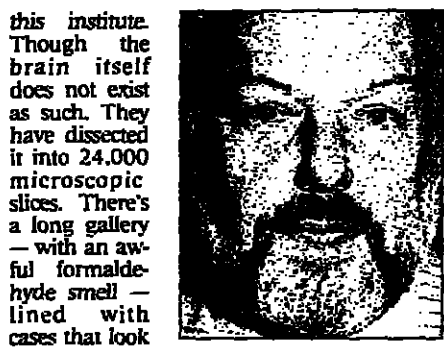
The award of the international critics prize at the Berlin Film Festival to Dusan Makavejev's *Gorilla Bathes at Noon* marks a triumph comeback for the enfant terrible of the Sixties and director of the celebrated *W.R.: Mysteries of the Organism*.

At 60 the Yugoslav director has changed very little in the 22 years since *W.R.* His mischief has lost none of its ingenuity. When *W.R.* finally reached British television screens recently, as part of Channel 4's "Banned" season, some of the full frontal views were too much for the sensibilities of the Major Nineties. Makavejev took great delight in devising some animated flowers and butterflies which fluttered in front of the offending parts. "It was much funnier. I should have thought of it first time round."

Makavejev has always been fascinated by the metaphorical underwear of history, and above all by the missing corset laces that somehow held together the communist illusion. "I love to see backstage. For years I've wanted to make a film about the routines of the Lenin mausoleum in Red Square, but they're very secretive about it."

"Of course there's a special institute dedicated only to looking after the mummy. There are people who do the daily routines, then the quarterly overhaul, and the annual overhaul," he says, making it sound like car maintenance. "Then there's another institute for Lenin's brain, which was established as soon as he died - Institut Mosga. Institute of the Brain. Since then they've acquired other important brains too, like Mayakovsky's. The idea is to study them and see if there are some special connections in these exceptional organs."

"I have managed to get into



Dusan Makavejev: now back in critical favour

this institute. Though the brain itself does not exist as such. They have dissected it into 24,000 microscopic slices. There's a long gallery - with an awful formaldehyde smell - lined with cases that look like butterfly wings. But in fact they are not. They are brain slices."

Lenin's brain figures prominently in *Gorilla Bathes at Noon*. The story is about an innocent Soviet officer who has somehow been left behind after the withdrawal from East Berlin. "He has to survive with the recognition that without his uniform and his beliefs there would just be a void in the place he occupies. He is offered a job as an assassin, but refuses, saying he has only been trained to kill in quantity, and doesn't know how to go about individual cases."

Makavejev's best films have used fragments of old films



Still arousing controversy, 22 years on: a scene from Makavejev's *W.R.: Mysteries of the Organism*

and documentary footage combined with the dramatic structure. In *W.R.* he combined dramatic action with extracts from old Stalinist films and Nazi pseudo-science documentaries.

A comic post-mortem on 40 years of communist myth, *Gorilla Bathes at Noon* uses long extracts from *The Fall of Berlin*, a kitsch and grandiose old Soviet panegyric to Stalin which proved the camp hit of last year's London Film Festival.

Makavejev's hero claims to be the offspring of the couple who are reunited in the finale under the benedictory gaze of Stalin himself.

He also works into the story the actual demolition of a colossal statue of Lenin in East Berlin. "They were very secret about the demolition because they anticipated demonstrations. But I made friends with

the demolition firm, which was actually the same that originally erected it. And I kept the workmen supplied with beer, so that everyone was very cooperative about letting us shoot at every stage."

"We also filmed the demonstrators, who were very expressive when they saw our actor in his Soviet uniform. They were very incompetent agitators - just stood around singing communist songs and holding placards saying 'Hands Off Our History'. I could have shown them how to do it better - but they were awful people, old Stalinists, so I didn't bother."

Today, says Makavejev, the film-maker's problem is that it is impossible to invent anything madder or more extravagant than real life. "In terms of the daily news bulletins, the things I invented in *W.R.* now seem positively normal."

He is as fascinated as appalled by events in his native Yugoslavia. "The descent into savagery is so fast. The news media cannot keep up with it. There is a total madness. People come back from the front with packs full of weapons. If they don't like the service in a restaurant, they just lob a bomb into the kitchen. And youngsters play dare games, seeing who can hold on to a grenade longer. So what, in this atmosphere, if they lose an arm or two? How can fiction keep up with this kind of absurdity?"

There is no gorilla in the film. "There should have been but we shot in October and gorillas are very delicate. That's why they bathe at noon in the zoo. I once watched as the keepers sprayed water from the safety of a rock, while the public watched from behind another wall. In fact the gorilla was the freest and happiest person of them all. So the title stayed, if not the gorilla."

FROM the Abbey Theatre direct to Broadway may be an unusual route, but that's the path chosen for Brian Friel's new play *Wonderful Tennessee*. It has set a June 30 opening in Dublin prior to a New York transfer in October. Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa* colleagues, director Patrick Mason and designer Joe Vanek, are on hand, as is one of the *Lughnasa* principals, Catherine Byrne. The cast also includes Ingrid Craigie, seen last year at the Bush in *Belfry*, Donal McCann and John Cavanagh.

Tennessee, N.Y.C.



● THE literature prize decided by children - the WH Smith Mind Boggling Books Award - has been won by Philip Ridley with his novel *Krindlekrax*. Ten children aged between nine and 12

picked out Ridley for the £5,000 prize from a shortlist of six young authors writing for children. *Krindlekrax* is the third children's novel to be written by the 32-year-old Ridley.

Last chance...

ENGLISH National Opera has announced positively the last-ever run of Jonathan Miller's "Little Italy" production of *Rigoletto* before: in 1987, to be precise. But this time perhaps the company really means it. In which case hurry along to the Coliseum (071-836 3161). The production is a classic of its kind, bold in conception, brilliant in execution. There is nostalgia in the return of some members of the original 1982 cast: Arthur Davies as the "Duke", Jean Rigby as Maddalena and John Rawnley in the title role. Rosa Mannion is Gilda, and Alex Ingram conducts. Final performances tonight and Friday.

"SUPERB MOVIE MAKING ... MESMERISING."
"FIERCELY EROTIC" "IMMACULATE ACTING"
"IMPECCABLY DIRECTED, INTELLIGENTLY WRITTEN AND SPLENDIDLY ACTED."

Jeremy Irons a film by Louis Malle Juliette Binoche



Desire. Deceit.

Damage.

Miranda Richardson

IN THE WEST END AND AT A CINEMA NEAR YOU NOW

LONDON

ROYAL BALLET: Tomerlin David Burrell's elegant and beautiful one-act ballet, is scheduled to be performed at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on the 10th and 11th of March. The ballet is a modern take on the 19th-century ballet, with William Forsythe's aggressive and expressive in the middle, somewhat elevated, represents the art form at the end of the century. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 0 0 0 0, 10th and 11th March, 7.30pm.

L'ASSASSINO DI CALAIS: The international opera department of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama presents the final performance of Donizetti's 4th opera, complete with its full cast, to be performed by students from the London Contemporary Dance School. Cive Tring conducts. Guildhall School of Music and Drama, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: Sir Peter Maxwell Davies conducts his own composition *Worlds* together with Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and the *Fifth Symphony*. Festival Hall, South Bank, SE1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm.

FLAMINGO: The Flamingo string ensemble makes its London debut performing Liszt's *Symphony for Strings*, Saint-Saëns's *Concerto*, and Beethoven's *Symphony*. Barbican, St. John's Lane, EC2A 3 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm.

SQUARRE: Edward Petherbridge and a vocal ensemble in David Maxwell's 70-minute comedy concerning a peculiarly severe case of writer's block. 15 years on one paragraph. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

ALICE: Adam Faith's Bill Naughton's 1963 Jack the Lad who briefly finds human feelings. Play and characters now look antique. Queen's, St. James's Palace, W1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

ANNA KARENINA: Staged. Expensive award-winning adaptation returns for a second London showing. Recommended. Trafalgar, 20th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

CAROUSEL: Triumphant revival of the National Theatre's production. SE1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

CHAZZY FOR YOU: Thrillingly staged new version of the German musical *Chazzy*. Old Compton Street, W1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

CYRANO DE BERGERAC: Robert Lindsay leads the cast in the 10th anniversary production of the play. Old Compton Street, W1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

ENTERTAINING MR SLOANE: Black, pointed review of Orson's first success, with Janet Dine and Ian Golder as a subtly amoral brother-and-sister team. Greenwich, Greenwich, SE10 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

THE GIFT OF THE GOSSAMER: Peter Shaffer's latest, a beautiful revision of his 1960s play. Old Compton Street, W1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

THE INVISIBLE MAN: Not so scary as the original. In a dark, moody, and the show is as good as not. Paul King's magic tricks are amazing. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

NEW RELEASES: A BRIGHTER SUMMER DAY: Edward Yang's mystery epic about restless Taiwanese youth at the turn of the century. Four hours long, but you don't mind. NCA (071-938 8800).

TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Karl Knight

King's Head, 115 Upper Street, N1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Then Tues-Sat, 8.30pm, mat. Sat, 3pm, Sun, 3.30pm.

FRANK PIG SAYS HELLO: Pat McCann's drama of a disturbed boy whose fantasy life turns to grim reality as he grows up. Best New Irish Play at last year's Dublin Festival. Theatre Upstairs, Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

REGIONAL: **BIRMINGHAM:** In another intriguingly balanced programme in the Towards the Millennium series, Simon Patten conducts the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in a new production of *Les Contes de la Forêt* by Maurice Strakosky. Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 0 0 0 0, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

BIRMINGHAM: Surprisingly, it is the first time that the acclaimed Birmingham symphony conductor has played at the city's premier jazz venue. He plays with The Blue Notes. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

ON THE PISTE: John Godber's *On the Piste* is a comedy about a man in a commercial art world. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

PLAYLAND: South African writer Athol Fugard's two-handers, *Woman, Woman* and *Boys in the Trees*, are being performed at the Market Theatre. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT: William Christie's play about a man and his aunt. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

TRELLAWNY OF THE WELLS: Helen McCrory's play about a woman and her family. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

LONG RUNNERS: *30 Blood* by David Hare. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

UNDER SEIGE: A play about a man and his family. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

WINTER TALE: A play about a man and his family. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA: A play about a man and his family. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

THE WOMAN IN BLACK: A play about a man and his family. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA: A play about a man and his family. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA: A play about a man and his family. Comedy, 10th March, 7.30pm. Tel: 071-938 8800.

SOUL: Alan Jackson is a bemused spectator amid the merrymakers at a nostalgia night

Party policy that proved irresistible

The Giants of '70s Soul
Wembley Arena

NINE acts in three hours plus: bargain of the year for lovers of a certain style of soul, perhaps, but an exercise in endurance and alienation for anybody else. It meant nine different variations on "Wembley, I love you", "I want you all to put your hands in the air right now" and "Are you ready to party?", not to mention forced introductions to nine sets of band members.

Imagine the mass karaoke that took place between each artist's performance, the endless comings and goings of DJ host Mike Read and the atmosphere of determined hedonism that swept the arena from first to last, and something approaching the full piquancy of this extended wallow in a certain kind of glitter-strewn nostalgia may become clear. Dancin' rescripted by John Godber, it was as if somebody had locked us all in a giant nightclub, circa 1974, and thrown away the key.

The recent revival of interest in the decade that good taste forgot has been well documented, of course. But this was not a night out for those self-conscious West Enders who pore over the style mags then rush to John Galiano or Pam Hogg to achieve a look of expensive retro: they had all stayed home to play Lenny Kravitz and polish their platforms to glossy perfection.

There was not a flared trouser or centre parting to be spotted among the young on the dance floor, making conga lines on that area of space set aside as a giant dance floor, or singing loud the words to every disco classic spun from the stage. And the carnalists of the evening's performers were those who, like Edwin Starr, picked up on the mood of relentless abandon and played to it.

A relatively minor figure in the soul music scene, he is best remembered for the anti-Vietnam stance of the angry "War". Here, however, it was revived

briefly only as an excuse for some call-and-response audience participation. "Tell you what, let's forget all that doom and gloom stuff," Starr suggested, bringing it to an early close. "I want you to imagine you are lying on a beach in Barbados, with your favourite drink in one hand and your favourite person in the other..." The evening's biggest ego by a very clear margin, he was also its biggest hit, over-running his allotted time, good-natured headliners KC and the Sunshine Band saw Tube-dependent revelers leave en masse during their set.

Elsewhere on the bill, some reputations teetered, others endured. Rose Royce and Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes, both having long since lost the vocalists who delivered their greatest hits, were at a disadvantage to start with, while the only two British acts, Heatwave and the Real Thing, sounded clumsy and unschooled next to the tight four-part harmonies of all-brother band Tavares.

Meanwhile, the man who might most accurately be called a giant of Seventies soul, Billy Paul, performed his classic Philly ballad "Me and Mrs Jones" to smoky perfection yet was rewarded with only muted applause from an audience impatient for the disco atmosphere to be restored. Celebrating the high street end of the black music spectrum, the evening was a riot for party animals but a trial for historians. But then, as the now-popular George McRae proved early on with a cruelly elongated "Rock Your Baby", sometimes the memory of four minutes of distant, tacky perfection is better than seven minutes in the here and now.



Edwin Starr: not perhaps a true giant of soul music, but undoubtedly the most popular performer at Monday night's marathon show.

LONDON CONCERTS: Elgar tentatively reassessed; and the start of a Schoenberg chamber series

Authentically British compromise

RPO/Mackerras
Barbican



Sir Charles Mackerras: only a cautious attempt at authenticity?

AT LAST a distinguished conductor is taking seriously the radical findings of Robert Philip's recent book *Early Recordings and Musical Style*. Philip discovered, through 1920s recordings, that composers such as Elgar and Richard Strauss interpreted their own music in a style utterly alien to modern ears, and asked why we do not normally try performing it the way they wanted. Well, prior to this Elgar concert, Sir Charles Mackerras announced to the critics that he would be "leading the orchestra towards a style of playing that will be similar to Elgar's own style of performance."

It was lucky he did tell us, because I would not have guessed from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's playing, which was spirited and often ferocious, that it was so different. The music was noisy but not unusually endowed with slithering strings or elastic speeds. Either Mackerras is proceeding very cautiously backwards towards authenticity, or modern habits are too deeply

ingrained to be cast off easily. Even obvious invitations for the violins to pile on the portamento — the big G-string tune in the Introduction and Allegro for Strings, for instance — were accepted only with fastidious discretion.

Let us not get too bogged down in stylistic dogma, however. What counts is the spirit of a performance, and Elgar would surely have approved the passionate sweep of Mackerras's readings. Yes, the first movement of the Second Symphony was over-brassy in places, and the scherzo was insanely fast. In both cases, subtler nuances were sacrificed. Fine. I would much rather hear the essence so powerfully conveyed than have a work presented as a kind of exercise in neatness.

And that applies most especially to the essence of this work. Ostensibly it invokes the "spirit of delight", through the quotation from Shelley which prefaces it. But it is short through with nightmares of creative and mortal extinction. Elgar wrote nothing more terrifying than the devastating brass and percussion blitz in the scherzo, and Mackerras caught the crushing horror of it perfectly.

Sarah Walker, who celebrates the 25th anniversary of her concert debut with a Wigmore Hall recital tomorrow, was the ardent soloist in *Sin Pausa*. The part lies low for her, and she forced the tone early on. But in the later songs she soared gratefully upwards with customary grace and intelligence. How sad, though, that Elgar set such dismal Victorian sea-poetry. What might he have done with a masterpiece such as Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach*?

RICHARD MORRISON

Work is still in progress

Arditti Quartet/
SPNM Anniversary
Purcell Room/
Queen Elizabeth Hall

ives of the Second Viennese School, that vastness of spiritual aspiration could be missed no more easily than could the vastness of the single, compound movement's physical proportions. On the surface, its counterpart can seem rather relentless. Schoenberg, ever the traditionalist, always preferred solid line to colouristic devices. But this epic journey also takes in both the anarchy and roughness of Beethoven and the discipline and ripeness of Brahms.

The few moments of doggedness were outweighed by their intelligent moulding of line, phrasing and section and by their appositely spacious and ripe overview of the work.

Berg's Lyric Suite, nearly 20 years

younger, inhabits a world of self-concerned emotion and tension; this is internal, as opposed to Schoenberg's external, music; though in another shapely performance the Ardittis kept the textures admirably clear-headed. Likewise, Webern's *Five Pieces*, Op. 5 (1905), strands of naked thought translated as if by immediate instinct into distilled sound, showed the group not only to be technically at least as well equipped as any of their peers, but able to realise the ripeness as well as the polish of Webern's colours.

The previous afternoon the Society for the Promotion of New Music brought its 50th birthday celebrations to an end with a long concert in the

Queen Elizabeth Hall by Jane's Minstrel. In truth, it spoke more of earnestness than of joy. There were nevertheless some promising pieces. Andy Vore's deftly composed *Five Little Fly Stories* (1989), whimsical, sometimes grotesque, sometimes allegorical settings of fly-related verse by five different poets, ended the proceedings on an encouraging note, its gently poised vocal lines perfectly suited to Jane Manning's delivery.

Karen Markham's *Whirligig* (1991) was encouragingly full of ideas and energy, while Diana Burrell's *The Barrow* (1991) exploited its low-pitched means to effective and disturbing ends. Tom Ingoldby's *Te Renia* (1991) also had a dark, unsettled atmosphere, but Yannis Kyriakides's *No One's Filming* (1990) was too long on space, too short on content. Continued performances all.

STEPHEN PETTITT

ENTERTAINMENTS

ART GALLERIES

THEATRES

CINEMAS

OPERA & BALLET

THEATRES

CINEMAS

OPERA & BALLET

THEATRES

CINEMAS

OPERA & BALLET

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CINEMAS

OPERA & BALLET

Piper who still calls the tunes



American singer, stage and screen actor Howard Keel (left), starting a 34-date concert tour tonight, talks to Richard Morrison

Howard Keel looks indestructible, and probably is. Tonight, the 74-year-old pin-up of the blue-rose brigade dusts off his "Younger than Springtime", polishes up his "stranger in Paradise", and begins an astonishing British tour. A real man's tour. In 34 days he performs 34 towns. That's 38 songs a night, seven nights a week for five weeks. Nor are the towns conveniently placed. Crawley, Sheffield, Norwich, Glasgow... these come in successive nights.

Either the six-foot-three ex-OHM singing star doesn't have an age, or he is trying to prove nothing. And this is billed as his farewell tour? Heaven knows how he hit the road when he was 17. The "farewell" bit is nonsense, of course. Keel has no intention of retiring. After almost 50 years of umpiring Rodgers and Hammerstein through what he calls "the old pes", the man once known as the singing Clark Gable is just getting to his stride. "I've always felt that singing Clark Gable stuff, actually, he reminds me. I've always felt I had a pretty good acting ability." In fact next year he launches the biggest venture in his roller-coaster career: a new theatre on the shores of a lake in Missouri. It will be led by the Howard Keel Showboat, and put on two shows a day to entertain the thousands of tourists who come to the area on their holidays. Keel will direct the shows, into which — we may safely assume — will be dropped the odd member from *Kiss Me Kate*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Kismet*, *Carousel* and *Oklahoma!*. "Even

now the place is bigger than Nashville," says Keel. But perhaps — how shall we say? — a little more genteel. "Andy Williams already has a theatre just up the road," says Keel, by way of confirmation.

If it works out, it will be another amazing instance of Keel's talent for self-reinvention. The son of an Illinois miner, the boy Howard (actually, it was Harold then) worked in the aircraft industry until, feeling the nascent power in "the old pipes", he entered a big vocal competition and won. That opened a door to Oscar Hammerstein II, who put him into the Broadway production of *Carousel*, then cast him as a cover in *Oklahoma!*. Thus did Keel achieve the unusual distinction of playing a matinee in one hit Broadway show and an evening performance in another. He could hardly have known whether he was seeing a bright golden haze on the meadow, or June bustin' out all over.

When *Oklahoma!* came to London in 1947, Keel was cast in the lead. "That first night at Drury Lane will never be topped in my life. We did 14 encores — the curtain calls lasted nearly an hour. I did the show for a year in London, nine performances a week. They wanted me to stay longer, but I was getting like a zombie."

Instead he transferred to Hollywood. MGM was looking for a new kind of singing actor, someone with a bit more beef than that dancing matinee star, Fred Astaire. The new musicals were about farmers, cowboys, fairground toughs — not Manhattan socialites. Lantern-jawed Keel fitted the bill.



Lantern-jawed hero in his cinema heyday: Howard Keel made a terrific impact as the leading brother in the 1954 MGM musical *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*

He looked as if he could hold his own in a saloon brawl. In fact, in the wrong mood, he looked as if he might start one. He had a voice to match: big, husky, baritone. The image was only enhanced (though his marriage wasn't) when the gossip columns got hold of his off-screen dalliance with Kathryn Grayson, his co-star in *Kiss Me Kate*.

Keel had six years at the top, from *Annie Get Your Gun* in 1950, via his best-known role as the oldest brother in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* in 1954 to *Kismet* in 1955. Then the old-style musical faltered; MGM dithered, and Keel crashed. In the era of Elvis, Keel suddenly looked very middle-aged.

He turned to straight acting, but picked the wrong films. "For about three years, I stopped singing altogether. Finally one day, I looked at myself in the mirror and said 'You've been given a gift and you are not giving it back. That's a sin.'"

So Keel toured with big musicals throughout the 1960s and 1970s. But they were difficult years. The upstanding hero, who belted out ditties about corn being as high as an elephant's eye, began hitting the bottle. It could have been Howard's end. Instead, he was rescued by two lucky breaks: his second marriage, to an air hostess 25 years his junior, and an obscure television show called *Dallas*.

"They were looking for someone to cover for Jim Davies, who played Jack Ewing," says Keel. "I didn't know this, but he was in serious trouble with a brain tumour. I said 'No way', because he was wonderful in the part." Instead, the *Dallas* masterminds turned Keel into the redoubtable Clayton Farlow, the new husband of Miss Ellie. "They signed me for two episodes, then for another ten, then for ten more. They were very tentative about it."

Ten years later, Clayton Farlow was still there and Keel's career had been spectacularly reborn. He was bigger in the 1980s than he had been in his MGM days. He was also a sex symbol again — albeit for the over-sixties. "A thousand corsets

creaked in time," reported the *Daily Mirror* of his London concert in 1984. "A thousand withering hearts swelled like Yorkshire pud in the Sunday oven."

Cruel, perhaps, but it sums up the current state of Keel-appeal accurately enough. And Keel himself, the old-trooper *sans pareil*, knows exactly how to exploit it. He lives by the first law of showbiz, perhaps the only law — "survive".

But don't belittle his vocal gift. The albums he made in the mid-1980s, including *Reminiscing* which sold a Madonna-esque 250,000 copies in its first seven days of release, exemplify American ballad-singing at its best: beautifully stylish and with an ease that

conceals excellent technique. He still prides himself on singing all his old songs in the same key as he did 40 years ago: not something that one of his few rivals for vocal longevity, Sinatra, can claim.

"Well, I'm a trained singer, and I haven't had quite so wild a life as old Frank," says Keel, a trifle wistfully. Oh, I don't know. These OAPs in Folkestone can get pretty wild on a Wednesday, they say. And then there's Croydon, Southend, High Wycombe... How long will you carry on, Howard? "Depends how long the old pipes hold out, I guess."

● Howard Keel's tour ends at the Barbican, London (071-638 8891) on April 12

OPERA IN LONDON: Sublimely conducted Berlioz and substantial, second-guess Verdi

Temptation anyone would accept

It would be unjust to say that the Royal Opera's current run of luck is holding up remarkably well: vision and planning must have something to do with it. Either way, *La Damnation de Faust* on Monday was an evening of overwhelming musical splendour, with orchestral playing, choral singing and soloists of the sort of which dreams are made.

The return of Sir Colin Davis to conduct Berlioz was anyway cause to rejoice, reviving memories of so many performances when he was music director, and indeed surpassing them. His approach to this composer has not changed, but has been honed to perfection: absolute clarity of texture, and thence realisation of the inexhaustible range of colour Berlioz invested in his scores. The Davis sound is lithe, clean and muscular — not for him spurious, non-Gallic romantic wailing, but Gallic precision, exactness and an infallible sense of structure.

Yet under his direction the score takes off into realms of near-indescent rapturousness. The soaring spring tune in *Faust's* opening aria gave notice that this was to be an exceptional evening, and so it proved to be. Whether coaxing playing and singing of heart-stopping beauty in "D'amour l'ardente flamme", tripping through the diaphanous Sylphs' dance or cutting up a storm in the Gaudemus chorus, he beats time with an English imperatibility that borders on parody. But he has of course already done all the work, and it would be worth Covent Garden prices to attend his rehearsals. I think I might reject false gas and trumpets in the hereafter in favour of Sir Colin conducting Berlioz.

The singing was of the sort that clearly demonstrates the absolute



Samuel Ramey (left) as Méphistophélès, "vocally impeccable"; Jerry Hadley as Faust "made light of the role's difficulties"

necessity of international opera houses. Jerry Hadley made light of the title role's notorious difficulties, indeed almost made it sound too easy. His cleanly focused tone has a traditional French sound to it but is anything but bloodless; and it is allied to an uncommon breadth of musical phrase. He risked some melting notes from the head (he might not risk them in Italy) and

sang Marguerite. Her tough, voluminous voice is at once slightly metallic and hugely voluptuous, and comes with a fragile, vulnerable stage presence — perfect for the role.

Harry Kupfer's lavish production, previously seen in Amsterdam and Bregenz, seemed to aim at drowning the work in an ocean of irony. Hans Schwaenoch's spectacular set shows the interior of an opera house, and the Covent Garden auditorium lights are occasionally turned up to ensure that we are bound directly into the action. The peasants are ironical operatic peasants, the Eastern Hymn has ironical clouds made from flashing fairy-lights, the students (ironically) are grotesque old men. "Voilà des roses" is played on a rubbish tip (the famous Coca-Cola can only briefly be glimpsed), the Sylphs are horrible slugs, and so on and so on. The Hungarian March is a massive production number in lacy operetta costumes, and we dutifully applauded — ironically, of course.

Yet Kupfer has devised a coherent way of presenting this famously intractable piece on the stage, and there is a vibrant theatricality to his, or, concept. Indeed, the Ride to Hell and the destruction of the set are almost old-fashioned coups de théâtre. It is among his best work, on a level with the Bayreuth *Dutchman*. I have been to the theatre a few times in my life, but he had me fooled with one of his coups, and for that I will forgive much, even his kitschy (ironically kitschy) ending.

But in the end the most determined alienation hasn't a chance in the face of such musical strength. This is Sir Colin's — and Berlioz's — evening.

RODNEY MILNES

Crusader compared

The committing of adultery by a pastor's wife was too much for the censor in Trieste in 1850, and Verdi was obliged to make substantial changes to his 16th opera, *Stiffelio*. Unhappy with the revisions forced on him, he recast the work completely, changing the setting from 19th-century Austria to 13th-century Kent, and the pastor Stiffelio becoming a crusader, Aroldo.

Stiffelio has been playing with great success at the Royal Opera House, with Jose Carreras in the title role, and it was an astute choice of Chelsea Opera Group to offer Aroldo as their spring presentation (Queen Elizabeth Hall), enabling us to hear original and revision-side

by side. To make the comparison even more direct, COG was able to secure the services of Sir Edward Downes, the conductor of Covent Garden's *Stiffelio*.

Stiffelio is regarded as having the dramatic purity, while Aroldo takes the musical honours. It was not, therefore, a great loss that the COG performance was, as usual, a cast one. Indeed, with the chorus and orchestra ranged behind the soloist, the intensity at climactic moments was overwhelming. The ensemble finale of Act I, for example, may have brought

down only an imaginary curtain, but it packed a tremendous punch. The chorus, sometimes shaky, was here at its full-throated best.

The orchestra, too, had its insecure passages, but under Downes's masterly direction produced much sensitively phrased playing as well. Their finest moment came in the accompaniment to the powerful revenge aria of Egberto, Aroldo's father in law. In Act III, Consumed with shame at his daughter's behaviour, Egberto contemplates suicide; but then, on hearing that the vile seducer, Godvino, is once

again under his roof, he sings of his joy at the chance for vengeance. The orchestra's barely suppressed excitement was the perfect foil to Anthony Michaels-Moore's magnificent rage — a performance that brought the show to a standstill.

In the same class was Amanda Thane's Mina, whose breathless anxiety and remorseful gasps made for an affecting theatrical performance. Anthony Mee made a heroic stab at the title role, but did not allow himself the freedom he needed to vary his tone or shape his phrases. Bruce Rankin and Mark Beesley gave excellent support in the roles of Godvino and Briano.

BARRY MILLINGTON

RADIO REVIEW

Losers can be winning

Kicking a man when he is down can produce some interesting reactions, as the BBC coolly calculated when it set up its new Radio 4 series, *On the Ropes*. However, the Corporation is still a good Auntie: it has employed John Humphrys, who is a gentle man, to input the boot in these interviews with men who have a failure on their hands.

The two politicians who have ventured into the ring have been the most rewarding. David Mellor, on the first programme, gave a seamless performance as a man for whom everything had gone exactly as he could have wished. He would not confess to a single error of judgment, either in his private or his political life, or admit to doing anything now except enjoy life to the full.

If he really believed what he was saying, he must be one of the most arrogant and insensitive men who ever lived. But if, as it seemed, it was an act put on as a public demonstration of undefeatable inner pride, it was impeccable, and probably served its purpose. Not once did Humphrys get beneath Mellor's guard. But it would have been far less interesting if he had.

Neil Kinnock on Monday's pro-

gramme provided a complete contrast. He laughed, and put his failures on the table. He offered explanations but did not make excuses, and kept his dignity that way.

He said that the famous collapse of his Commons speech on the Westland affair was because he had had too long to prepare it. "I added a page at the beginning and as a result I over-adorned what had been a muscular speech," he said. Certainly on that occasion the muscles, like those in the old schoolboy chant, "stood out like sparrows' kneecaps".

The other failure he acknowledged was not to have called for a secret ballot in the pits at the time of the great miners' strike. His explanation was that he did not want to demoralise the miners — which he now considered was a decent

move but a political misjudgment. Here, I think, Humphrys got through to both the likableness and the weakness of Neil Kinnock — and, indeed, to the continuing sentimentality of the Labour party itself.

Even more likable was Ken Livingstone over on *Desert Island Discs* on Sunday. He gave a very sympathetic picture of his life as a boy among the tadpoles and small alligators in his bedroom; and whatever you thought of his politics at the time, his account of how, as a 34-year-old radical, he took over the Greater London Council was exhilarating for the sense of wonder with which he recalled it.

Now he, too, is "on the ropes", and seems to spend his time putting economic reports into his computer at home in the hope of doing a one-man revolution of the whole British economy. He let fall one revealing remark: "Change is unavoidable," he said, "but statecraft is about the way in which you can mellow and moderate the inevitable changes." If he abandoned his computer, I am sure he could have a great new career as leader of the working-class Tories.

DERWENT MAY

TELEVISION REVIEW

Pointed in which direction?

Shakespeare reworked familiar themes with ingenuity. So did Milton. For all her proven talent, Carla Lane does not seem quite to have managed it with her new BBC 1 comedy series, *Luv*, which began last night. It could have been made 20 years ago. If *Luv* is supposed to be a subtle part of the 1970s revival, it is too subtle.

For a location, Lane has returned to her Liverpool home, where she has no need to swot up on the cadences of conversation. For a cast, she has painted a family of *nouveau riche* father who has risen from the "dum-beap of a deprived childhood" to make a fortune from plastic plant pots; bored housewife who has "things going on in her head"; and three adopted children — a gay son, a daughter who lives with her Italian boyfriend, and an angst-ridden teenager who spends his days in bed and his evenings liberating battery-farm chickens.

Sniffing a plot for the opening episode, she settled for how the family has grown apart as it has grown older. *Blinkered dad* Harold (Michael Angelis), feels he has opened his chequebook often enough to earn his family's love. They don't know how to tell him

that money isn't everything. Mum Teresa (Sue Johnston) is tussling with the "Oh, what shall I do now the kids have grown up?" dilemma, and in textbook maternal fashion, is also struggling to build a bridge of understanding between father and children, a struggle complicated by her own yearning for independence from the kitchen sink.

The advantage of using such a familiar structure is that you can experiment with the dialogue, like taking a *Painting By Numbers* landscape and outrageously ignoring the prescribed colouring scheme. Or you can cram each episode with so many good lines that, as in *Cheers*, you forget the limitations of plot and setting. And if you regard lines such as a woman complaining of PMT and explaining to Harold that it stands for "Perhaps Men Should Try This" — which isn't even an elegant acronym — then *Luv* may still strike you as a side-clutching success.

More problematically, the blending of comedy and melodrama does not seem to work very smoothly. At the end of last night's episode, Teresa visited a young solicitor and asked him to arrange a divorce. Surprisingly, she was baffled to

learn that her husband must be told of the separation process and could not just be informed of it later by a letter.

"Is your wife happy?" she then asked the solicitor, who looked blank. "You don't know, do you?" Teresa added, and then swiftly decided to scrap her divorce plans because "I don't want to bring him shame, you see?"

Well, we got the point, but without feeling moved either to laugh or cry.

JOE JOSEPH

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FRANK MARTIN
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MOZART
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6 German Dances K 596
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NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Digging into the reserves

With half its remaining pits threatened by closure, Nottinghamshire is putting its heart into encouraging new industries and enterprise. David Young reports

The landscape of rural Nottinghamshire is never dominated by the coal industry. The pits blend into the countryside, screened by ancient forests. The industry does, however, dominate conversation, and, in the May local elections when all seats on the county council come up for re-election, the local economy and coal will be among the dominant issues.

Now, the council is looking to the future and is seeking assisted-area status for the six main parts of the county that will be worst affected by pit closures.

Unlike areas of surrounding counties, Nottinghamshire has never benefited from government regional aid; its success in attracting new industry has traditionally been the result of the efforts of the local authorities in partnership with private developers.

Ironically, the county has received more aid from the European Community through projects for the iron, steel and coal industries and textile industry than from central government. Nottinghamshire's selling point has never been soft loans or rent-free periods. Instead, the county has emphasised the quality of life and the availability of good housing, good local education and an adaptable and reliable workforce.

While awaiting the result of its application for regional aid, the county council has decided to act on its own initiative to try to kick-start the local economy.

The council has drawn £10 million from its reserves to spend on projects to improve the infrastructure, and to provide a stimulus for the construction industry by improving its housing stock and school buildings.

The £10 million almost exactly matches the sum that the council

will lose in rates revenue from British Coal if the closure programme goes ahead.

One of the council's projects is the development and letting of factory buildings, in partnership with English Estates, which will include small starter units for new enterprises.

Research has shown that Nottinghamshire has a higher than average number of small companies, employing fewer than 25 staff. Rather than access to finance, the main obstacle for people wanting to start new businesses has been the difficulty of finding suitable premises. The council is therefore giving priority to the development of an enterprise unit at Cotgrave, where the local pit is scheduled for closure.

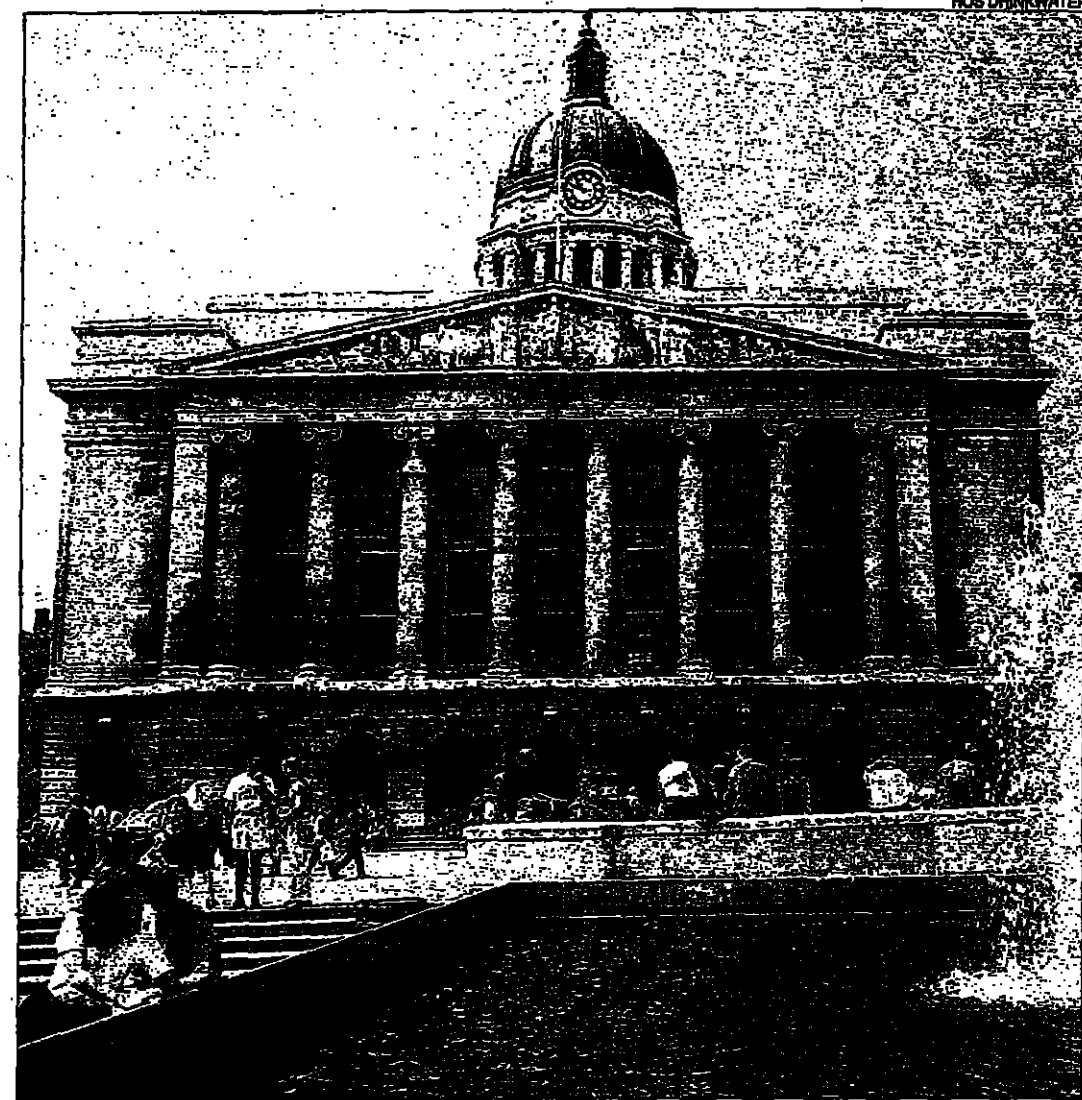
On land owned by Cotgrave Town Council and in co-operation with it, the county council will build a £200,000 unit to provide premises for new small businesses. There will be training and advice facilities on site.

One of the bigger projects being urgently promoted by the county council is the establishment of a European Clothing Centre in the Ashfield area. Nottinghamshire has traditionally been a centre of the clothing and textile industries.

The council's plan is to provide a new or refurbished 10,000 sq ft building for a centre that will house a collection of initiatives, including a work and technology project, fashion forecasting, training assistance, design advice, a fabric-sourcing databank and a dye-sampling unit.

The project is the subject of submissions for funding from the EC. The council hopes that it will be able to provide the centre building for about £650,000.

The council is also supporting trade missions this year to Austria,



Nottingham fights back: the city and county is making strenuous efforts to attract more investors



Dennis Pettitt: jobs fear



Martin Gawith: a battle

Spain and Denmark which will allow several local companies to take part in exhibitions to market their products and services.

The county's other main industry — tourism — is not being forgotten. Last year, tourism generated £175 million for the county, and Nottinghamshire is to market a new package of attractions this year. A "travelling route" aimed particularly at those American visitors who centre their holidays on Stratford-on-Avon then move north to Edinburgh is being promoted through travel agents in America.

Surveying the scene from County Hall, Dennis Pettitt, the council leader, says: "Weeks and months of speculation were finally ended

by the announcement of the extent of the pit closure programme was made. We all knew then the economic and personal devastation that the announcement would cause. But it was worse than anyone had dared to fear."

Pit closures are nothing new to the county. In 1961, when the industry was at its peak, there were 39 pits in Nottinghamshire employing 56,000. Today there are only 13 mines, employing 13,000. The seven pits now threatened would, if closed, drain a huge amount from the local economy. Wages and salaries paid by British Coal to employees in the county total £250 million a year, and a further £250 million is generated

by the industry and spent in the county with suppliers and sub-contractors. The British Coal rate bill alone accounts for £9 million.

"The fight for coal goes on, and along the way battles continue to be won," Mr Pettitt says. "I hope that all the facts and evidence to support coal will be heard and that through the efforts of individuals, groups, unions, local authorities and MPs, the future of our mining industry will be decided rationally and with conviction."

"It is a tribute to the people of Nottinghamshire that with one voice they spoke out against this programme of devastation and against a decision which, in their minds, made no sense."

Traditional craft attracts the quality seekers

The county has plenty to offer incoming companies, including good travel links

Sandwiched between the M1 to the west and the A1, soon to be motorway standard along its entire length, to the east, the county is well placed to serve most markets in Britain and, via the east-coast ports, the Continent. David Young writes.

That fact has not been lost on many businesses, notably some small Japanese companies in the textile trade, which have been quick to draw on the local tradition of high quality craftsmanship. The most expensive wedding gowns now sold in Japan — costing about the same as a Honda sports car — are made in the county with fine Nottingham lace trimmings.

In other sectors of industry, the region's reputation for skilled work is also prized. NSK-RHP, a Japanese-controlled bearings maker, has chosen the county for its European research centre for studying materials used in bearings and engineering components.

Toray, a Japanese textile group, has also invested in nearby Mansfield. When its plant reaches peak production levels, it will employ almost 700 staff, many of them former miners who have undergone retraining schemes.

The Inland Revenue has transferred many staff to the county, but English Heritage's decision to abandon plans to move to Nottingham from London has been a disappointment. The county's economic planning department, the other local authorities in the area and the North Nottinghamshire training and enterprise council (TEC) are all working to attract a new business. "The trouble is," says Martin Gawith, the county council's deputy leader, "that we need the equivalent of four or five Toyota car plants to be built just to meet present employment needs."

And now we face big job losses in the pits. The area has benefited from European Community aid to help restructure the coal and textile industries, but further EC funding depends on matched spending by the local authority, which needs government aid and approval.

But pessimism is not a Nottinghamshire characteristic, and work is in progress to improve the local infrastructure to attract more investors. Unfortunately, local plans for a light railway to serve the northern edge of the city and for the reopening of rail lines to form the Robin Hood line to connect Mansfield with the national rail network have been shelved until the government gives approval and finance.

The East Midlands Investment Campaign, backed by East Midlands Electricity, which has its headquarters in Nottingham and is one of the area's biggest employers, is also promoting the benefits of relocation here.

With the help of local chambers of commerce, councils and the trade and industry department, the campaign is highlighting the merits of the area's educational and leisure facilities, and its labour force.

A spokesman says: "Labour relations are exemplary, attendance is above average, with far fewer industrial stoppages than in the rest of the UK, productivity is high and rates of pay are below the national average."

Tony Wilkinson, the chairman of the North Nottinghamshire TEC, adds: "If we are to compete in a world market-place, we must set ourselves nothing less than world-class targets for training, education and enterprise. Failure to do so will hinder the economic success of the area."

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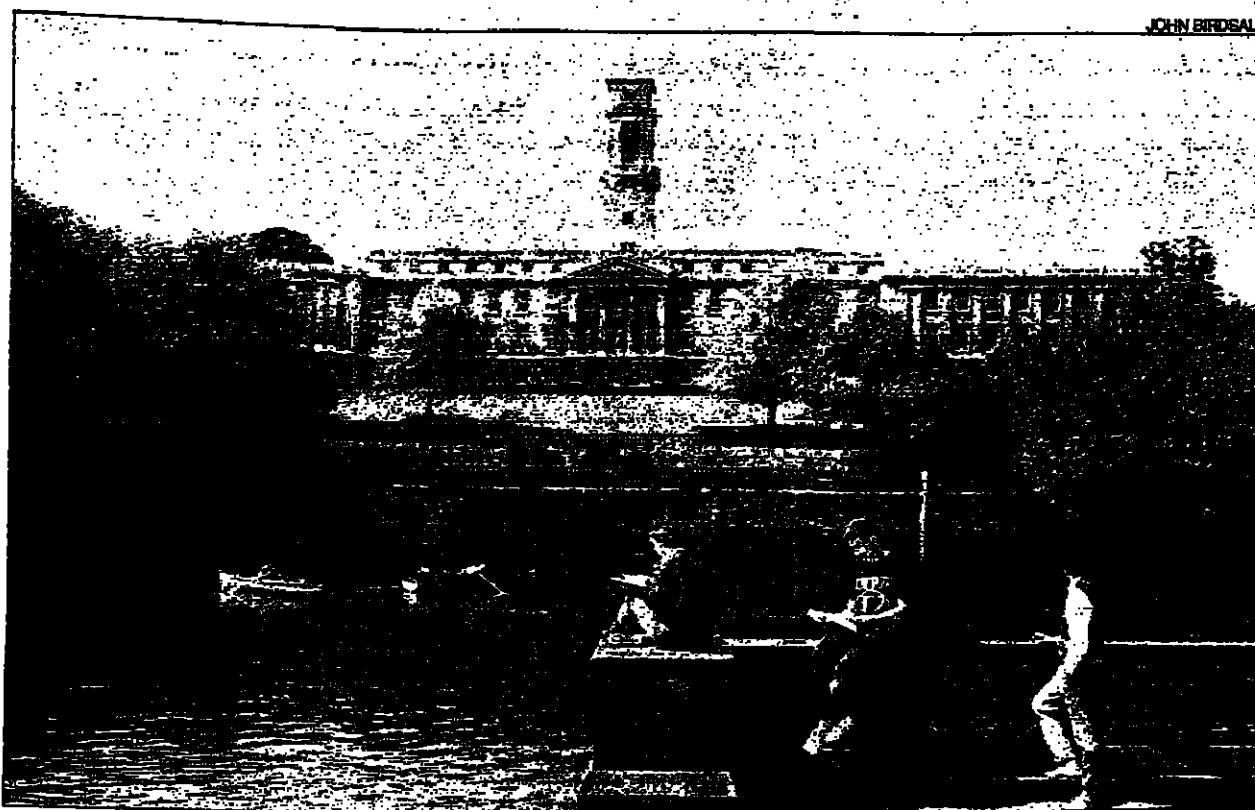
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Building on tradition: Nottingham University, a rising star in the field of higher education, now has a rival

Lesson to other cities

Nottingham is fast becoming one of Britain's premier cities for higher education. More than 25,000 students at any one time can testify to the quality of its two universities. The city's growing reputation is not lost on applicants. Both Nottingham University and the recently resited, Nottingham Trent University have been expanding steadily in response to the demand for places.

Indeed, Nottingham University's 30 applicants per place is the highest for any British university. The growth in student numbers last year, from 10,000 to 10,500, could have been bigger but for a determination to maintain high entry standards and to preserve the quality of life on one of the country's most attractive campuses.

The new university, despite last year's change of status, has remained true to the roots established when it was Trent Polytechnic. "Although we are happy to have a university title", says Professor Ray Cowell, the vice-chancellor, "we are determined to preserve the distinctive mission we developed as a polytechnic, responding to the needs of both local and national employers."

Nottingham Trent has been expanding rapidly, although not at the reckless pace of some of its competitors. Student numbers have risen by 36 per cent over the past five years to about 16,000, including 5,000 part-timers.

The part-time tradition is a key element in Nottingham Trent's effort to serve the local community. The business school concentrates on helping local small and medium-size companies, and Professor Cowell sits on the boards of the training and enterprise council and the government's

With a growing number of students applying to its two universities, Nottingham is setting education records, John O'Leary writes

City Challenge initiative. The university's emphasis on sandwich courses typifies its determination to respond to the needs of employers. Sixty per cent of undergraduates have periods of work experience, a figure matched only by one other university. It is an approach that pays dividends in the employment records of graduates at a tough time in the jobs market.

Although Nottingham Trent's main business continues to be in teaching, it is also aiming to challenge the older universities' domination of research, particularly in applied fields. The textile industry is the focus of much activity, but recent projects have ranged from the development of an

airport security screening device to the provision of electricity in third world villages.

Nottingham Trent has, however, some way to go to emulate the research record of its neighbour. Nottingham University amassed contracts worth almost £14 million in the first six months of the current academic year, a 50 per cent improvement on the same period in 1991-2.

A sparkling performance in last December's official rankings saw 11 departments rated internationally outstanding, an achievement that put the university in the funding council's top ten for research.

Nottingham University is increasingly becoming recognised as a rising star in a wide

range of fields. There was recognition of this in the New Year's honours with knight-hoods for three Nottingham professors: David Hull (child health), Peter Mansfield (physics) and John Smith (the former head of the law school).

Few, if any, universities, have matched that feat.

Professor Colin Campbell, the vice-chancellor, says: "We are research-led, but we believe that the work we do inspires the teaching... the students are taught by the people who have made the discoveries and written the books."

Nottingham University's local links are firmly established. The Boots family provided the main site and much subsequent financial help, while today the city has constant access to a new arts centre and other facilities.

About 20,000 students have taken advantage of the university's adult education services. The students also play their part through the biggest community action group in any of the universities. The £5 million arts centre is one of a number of new building developments completed recently.

Others include the addition of about 600 residential places, enabling the university to maintain its guarantee of accommodation for all first-year and overseas students.

Although there were tensions between the two universities when Nottingham Trent was choosing its title, the institutions are largely complementary.

Each has built a reputation for quality — Nottingham Trent winning more awards for quality than any other polytechnic in the year before university status arrived — without duplicating provision.



From polytechnic to university: Nottingham Trent

Prepared for the worst

A positive attitude will be essential if mine closures go ahead

The employment issue in Nottinghamshire is so coloured by the proposed pit closures that efforts to improve the business climate might be overshadowed by the struggle to save pits.

However, the North Nottinghamshire training and enterprise council (TEC) is making sure that will not happen. New investors will continue to hear of the benefits of Nottinghamshire in terms of locations and people, and when the time comes for miners to enter the jobs market the skills and the support of the TEC will be at their disposal. Pat Richards, the TEC's chief executive, says: "The pits closure issue is one for which we are already developing a strategy."

"We will have to put over the message that here we will have a highly skilled, highly trained workforce, available for new



Under threat: Darren Pickavee at the Silverhill Colliery in Nottinghamshire

companies: workers who are loyal, self-reliant and capable of acquiring new skills. We do not pretend that the coal closures will not cause problems for whole communities throughout Nottinghamshire and in companies across a wide area. But we have to look forward and try to be positive."

The TEC already has an action plan to deal with closure of the Silverhill Colliery, at the employment department's request. The plan will be put into action if closure is confirmed and with minor changes could be applied to other mining

communities in the north of the county.

In developing the plan, the TEC staff had detailed discussions with local authorities, neighbouring TECs, the employment service, British Coal Enterprise and trade unions. English Estates and local employers were also consulted, as were present and past mineworkers.

The three strategic objectives of the plan are to create and preserve jobs through the regeneration, modernisation and diversification of the local economic base; to assist with

the long-term survival and recovery of communities directly or indirectly affected by coal closures; and to overcome key barriers to employment experienced by former British Coal employees and other jobless people living in local mining communities.

Mrs Richards says: "We are a business-to-business service. Our reason for being is to give local employers the wherewithal to develop solutions to training, enterprise, education and business needs."

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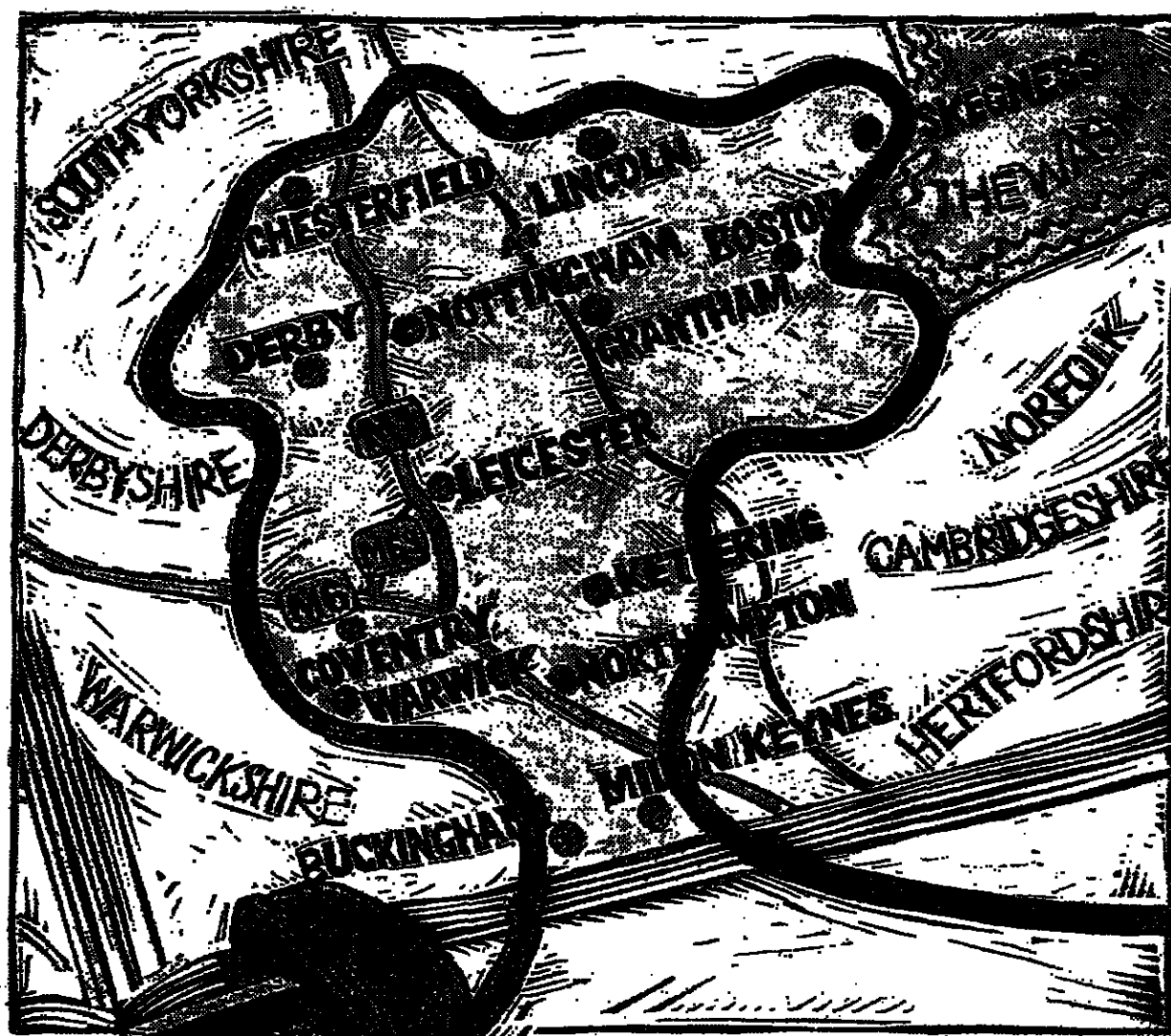
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The University of Nottingham traces its roots to support by industrialists, like Jesse Boot, founder of the Boots Company. Working with industry and commerce is part of its tradition and philosophy. In 1990-91 Nottingham attracted some £22.5 million of new research grants and contracts; in 1991-92 the total rose to £25 million. Over the first six months of 1992-93 the new grants and contracts totalled £13.87 million - 50% higher than the comparable figure for the same period last year.

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Andretti grasps new wheel of fortune



Change of pace: Michael Andretti, the 1991 IndyCar champion, reacquaints himself with a Formula One car during testing for McLaren at Silverstone

In the shadow of the giant team that line the pit-lane blind side at Silverstone, Michael Andretti paces alone towards a debriefing after the morning's testing. He is not unfamiliar with the grand prix scene. As a wide-eyed teenager, he visited his father, the super Mario of the Seventies, a winner of 12 grands prix, during his pursuit of the Formula One world championship. He has even tested McLaren's in previous seasons. Still, he looks a little lost, a little weary.

Used to pre-eminence in the IndyCar world — he was champion in 1991, runner-up in 1990 and last year — he has joined a McLaren team in technological transition after the withdrawal of Honda last year and the adoption of a Ford engine.

After a winter testing with Mika Hakkinen, the Finnish driver, and being treated as the team's No. 1, he has had to adapt to the late entrance of the imperious Ayrton Senna



Oliver Holt meets a man who has spurned IndyCar success in an attempt to emulate his father by becoming Formula One world champion

as his team partner in the South African grand prix on Sunday.

Nigel Mansell, the Formula One world champion, has done it the easy way. He leapt into the Newman-Haas team and is breaking lap records in testing. "He is with a really good team," Andretti said. "This year they should clean house."

Andretti's switch to Formula One promises to be rocky. The 30-year-old American is cautious about his prospects.

He sits back on a couch in the Marlboro trailer, picking intently from a bunch of grapes. Thicker-skinned than some of his rivals, he talks candidly, never skirting a question. "I

am going to have to learn a lot this year, but I always knew it would be tough. You have to be brave to drive these cars. I have had to adapt, but I am not quite there yet."

"Our goal has to be to be competitive, but nobody knows what stage the other is at. We are getting there, but we have a big job to do."

McLaren will not be the only ones hoping they can get to grips with their new car, which has active suspension, and give Andretti, renowned as an aggressive, charging racer, a chance of picking up points and winning races.

Mansell's move has heightened competition between IndyCar and Formula One. Some even see it as a straight

fight for survival. A successful Andretti might spark a grand prix revival with the American public. In the last decade, they have had only Eddie Cheever, under-achiever, to nail their colours to.

But it could change, according to Andretti.

"Everywhere I go in the States, people are coming up to me, patting me on the back and saying they hope I do well. At Unser Jr fans, Bobby Rahal fans, they are all my fans now as far as Formula One is concerned."

"When dad started winning races in Formula One, coverage got bigger and bigger. In 1978, when he won the world championship, it was bigger than any event in the States. But recently there have been no competitive American drivers. Who watches the Olympics if their country is not doing well?"

Who watches Formula One if it is a cakewalk for one team? Andretti won five IndyCar races last year and still finished

second in the championship. "In Formula One, you are effectively only racing against your team-mate because of the discrepancies in the teams' cars," Andretti said.

"In IndyCar, you know where you are because the cars are basically equal. You know that if a Lola is beating you by a second you can get there because it is down to you, the



Andretti: aggressive

driver. But here, if a Williams is quicker, you think it is down to something back in the garage."

Carl Haas, Andretti's erstwhile IndyCar boss, is sure he will overcome any initial uncertainties. "He is competitive. He is quick and he goes out there with a mind set to win. He is in a new team and it is not quite the same home to him as it was here, but in time he will succeed."

"I will still try to retain my aggressive style," Andretti said. "I would like to be as successful as my father and win the world championship. That is why you are here, to have a shot at it. But what motivates me primarily is fear of losing. I hate to lose."

"I am going to miss IndyCar racing. But I have always wanted to race in Formula One and, on this occasion, the opportunity was right and the timing was right. If I had not done it now, I might never have had the chance to do it again."

Torvill and Dean to return for 1994 Olympics

FROM MICHAEL COLEMAN IN PRAGUE

JAYNE Torvill and Christopher Dean, the former Olympic ice dance champions, are certain to take part in the next year's Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway, according to assurances given here yesterday by ice skating officials.

The deadline for professionals to reapply for "eligible status", as it is now termed, falls on June 8 when the council of the sport's governing body, the International Skating Union (ISU), meets in Würzburg, Germany. At that meeting will be Lawrence Demmy, representing Britain.

Demmy said yesterday, while sitting alongside other ISU colleagues: "I am confident that Torvill and Dean will have an application ready in time and on the table before us in Würzburg."

The return of the British pair to the amateur scene would be remarkable, as it comes ten years after they captured the Olympic dance gold medal in Sarajevo in 1984 and won their fourth world title the same year.

Demmy, a former world dance champion himself, is frequently in contact with the British couple, knows their

mood and has sufficient stature even to advise them. "Naturally they are holding back until the results from Prague but that is to see if Britain has earned a dance place at the Olympics."

The support of the British National Ice Skating Association will first be required and Demmy even spoke of "our terms" for the return. "We could insist for instance that they take part in the Tokyo worlds, after the Olympics, to enable Britain to have three dance couples at the next year's world championships, which we are staging in Birmingham," he said.

Four more previous pairs world champions, all from the former Soviet Union, stepped back into the Olympic arena yesterday. Applications for reinstatement, certain to be passed, have been received from Yekaterina Gordeyeva and Sergei Grinkov, Olympic champions in 1988 and four-times world title-holders, and from the reigning Olympic champions, Natalya Mishkutynok and Artur Dmityev.

Katarina Witt, the Olympic champion in 1984 and 1988, has already been reinstated.

Flower power puts skids under waltz

AS A treat, they brought several hundred schoolchildren into the stadium yesterday where the world championships are being held here in Prague, to watch the compulsory dances. It can be the most tedious of events, with the 29 couples propelling themselves in strict ballroom style to a rigid and prescribed pattern (Michael Coleman writes).

First comes the Westminister Waltz, followed by the Argentine Tango. All in all, five hours of it. After little better than five minutes the children, waving flags and lustily cheering each couple as it glided past, began to grow restive. One, perhaps a female supporter of Dukla Prague, flung a bunch of flowers onto the ice as the local hopes, Katerina Mizsova and Martin Simecka, went by. This is something which is just not done in ice skating while the action is taking place.

Up stood the referee, Hans Kutschera, and blew his whistle as loudly as he could above the strong waltz beat to bring

proceedings to a halt. The bouquet was right in the path of the Prague couple next time round though it took quite a while for them, their smiles as fixed as their hairdos, to appreciate play was stopped and they must begin it all again. The abashed children kept quiet from then on in, though most had quit before the tango.

As expected, Maya Usova and Aleksandr Zhulin, from Moscow, will go through into the original dance on Thursday in the lead from team colleagues Oksana Gishchuk and Yevgeny Platov. The Plovers, Susanna Rahkamo and Petri Kokko, hold third position, much to the approval of a strong Helsinki contingent led by the mayor, Susanna's father. In eighteenth position are the young British pair, Marika Humphreys and Justin Lanning, who are making their senior world debut. This is six places below the good. If they dance below this on Thursday then Britain will have no dance couple for the next Olympics.

New treatment planned for Hospitals Cup

Organisers of the Hospitals Cup, famed for its flour bombs, screaming nurses and young men in white coats, are preparing to make changes in the format of rugby union's oldest competition, dating back to 1875, because of the recommendations in the Tomlinson Report to reduce the number of teaching hospitals in the capital.

St Mary's and Charing Cross-Westminster, who contest this year's final at Old Deer Park today, are survivors from a field of ten, reduced from 12 in recent years by the amalgamation of Charing Cross and Westminster and University College and Middlesex. The future of St Bartholomew's is unclear and St Thomas's and Guy's may merge.

The medical profession's rugby addicts believe a new competition must emerge and, with that in mind, plans are being discussed for a national championship, which would see the leading London hospital involved in competition with major hospitals from all parts of the British Isles.

Dr Bob Phillips, president of the United Hospitals, who is a consultant at Charing Cross, denies that the event has become an anachronism. "That is a total misconception," he said. "It is contested and fought for as hard as any competition in the world. There are still very fine players within the hospitals. It is by no means past its peak."

A national tournament comprising the best hospital sides in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland would possess greater competition than has been seen

Peter Bills reports on plans being made by rugby men in the medical profession to provide a transfusion of interest to a contracting event

in recent years, when St Mary's have dominated.

"It would be a very fine competition and you couldn't say the top London medical school would dominate," Phillips said.

"We see it as the logical way forward, with perhaps 16 or 20 hospitals involved coming down to the final at a prestigious venue." The top London medical school would go into that national competition after winning the London event, which would survive as a slimmer down tournament.

With club loyalty becoming all important within the league structure, even the leading hospitals could not hope to have their best players always available to them.

But Phillips argues that it is the influence of those leading players off the field as much as on it which is so beneficial. "J. P. R. Williams did not play that often for Mary's yet he contributed immensely. Others have done the same," he said.

While politicians debate change, rugby men within the hospitals believe it is necessary to move with the times in a sporting sense. The idea of a national event should find widespread support, except perhaps from groundsmen left to tidy up the mess supporters traditionally leave in their wake.

Cooke calls for conclave of coaches on new laws

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

RUGBY union's experimental ruck-maul law, which has attracted so much critical comment during the five nations' championship, will come under close scrutiny by the world's leading coaches, if Geoff Cooke, the England team manager, can co-ordinate a meeting in Hong Kong later this month.

Cooke wants coaching representatives from the eight founder members of the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) to sit down together during the weekend of the Hong Kong sevens, March 27-28, so that the views of those at the sharp end of the international game can be presented to the board's annual meeting in April.

The experimental laws affect the lineout and possession following a ruck or maul, and several coaches — notably, Bob Dwyer, from the world champions, Australia — have indicated their disquiet. The coaches are also concerned that laws are framed without close reference to those who have to implement them on the international stage.

"It occurred to us that, having seen various people up and down the world voicing different opinions about the impact of the new laws, it might be useful to offer a collective view and feed it to the IRFB for information," Cooke said yesterday.

Ian McGeechan, the retiring Scotland coach, suggests that an international federation of rugby union coaches might benefit the game.

Cooke would also be happy to include other coaches from, for instance, Canada and Argentina. "We have no formal mechanism for expressing our views," Cooke added, "and

perhaps it would be valuable if we did."

Dwyer, who will be taking Australia's national sevens squad to the tournament, has already expressed his support for the meeting, while Dick Best (England), and McGeechan are due to be in Hong Kong anyway.

Cooke is awaiting responses from the other four countries, but is mindful that there are only three weeks between the Hong Kong dunes and the IRFB meeting, which is expected to ratify the laws.

Don Rutherford, technical director of the Rugby Football Board, which is supporting Cooke's efforts, has been gathering reactions in England. "It has become obvious that, while a lot of people are keen on these experimental variations, at the top end there are question marks," he said.

Before Hong Kong, England have five nations' championship business and they announced yesterday a squad of 47 from which the senior and A teams to play Ireland, on March 19 and 20 in Dublin, will be confirmed on Sunday. All those involved in the wins over Scotland and Spain last weekend are included. John Hall and Alan Buzza, late withdrawals from the A team last week, must confirm their fitness.

The senior XV is unlikely to be changed, but Cooke said: "It's unfortunate that we didn't show the killer instinct after going 23-6 up (against Scotland). We should have gone to town. Our supply of ball dried up and we didn't get our lineout working."

Paul Grayson, the Waterloo stand-off, has recovered from concussion and rejoins the squad, while Ian Hunter returns after a knee operation and is included among six wings. Today he will play in his club position of full back for the Barbarians in the annual Mobbs Memorial match at Northampton.

Lee Adamson, the Saracens lock, makes his first appearance for the Barbarians, who have also brought in Hew Woodland, the Neath centre.

Tim Rodber will oppose his club colleague, Wayne Shelford, who turns out for East Midlands.

Hall and Buzza expect to meet at Bath Recreation Ground on Saturday in the collision between unbeaten Wasps, the league leaders, and Bath, last season's champions. Bath prefer Gareth Chilcott at tight-head prop to David Hilton and hope that Andy Reed, the Scotland lock, will have recovered from an ankle injury in time to play in this eagerly-awaited match.

BACKS: Full backs: J. Webb (Bath), A. Buzza (Wasps), P. Hall (Scots), V. Jones (Leicester), J. Underwood (Leicester), I. Hunter (Northampton), S. Grayson (Leicester), H. Thompson (Northampton), M. Best (Northampton). Centres: W. Carling (Northampton), J. Grayson (Bath), P. de la Salle (Bath), J. Rodber (Wasps), P. Foster (Leicester), J. Steele (Northampton), P. Grayson (Wasps), S. Bates (Wasps), M. Jones (Northampton), K. Bracken (Bristol). **FORWARDS:** Props: J. Leonard (Leicester), J. Pridgen (Wasps), V. Jones (Leicester), C. Clark (Wasps), D. Garbutt (Leicester), M. Hynes (Wasps), A. Mullins (Leicester), H. Jones (Wasps), S. Moore (Leicester), M. Bedford (Northampton), M. Johnson (Leicester), A. Blackmore (Bristol), P. Hargreaves (Northampton), I. Rodber (Northampton), M. Greenwood (Wasps), S. O'Shea (Bath), J. Hall (Bath), N. Best (Leicester), M. S. G. Clarke (Bath), P. Richards (Leicester).

Cambridge in record win

Oxford University 18
Cambridge University 50

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

CAMBRIDGE University won the thirteenth University match by a record score at Crystal Palace yesterday, ending a two-year losing run and putting them 7-6 ahead in the series.

An emphatic eight-try win was crafted by the vision and ingenuity at stand-off half of Andy Spencer. A Great Britain under-19 amateur international of outstanding potential. His nine place kicks from ten attempts further embellished his deserved man of the match award.

Spencer's quick hands at the base of the scrum were the perfect creative foil for the pace in the centre of American, scorer of three tries, and King of the Cambridge captain, who went over twice in the left corner in the first half.

While both defences were prone to disconcerting leakage, the attacking commitment of the sides warmed a small but raucous crowd of 500 at the National Sports Centre, the first time it has hosted the event.

Trailing 22-6 after only 18 minutes, Oxford finally drew encouragement by a driving score at short range by Davies. Both Bailey and Masters also found gaps close to the opposition line.

Cambridge immediately spread the ball wide in the second half and a score by Marchant in the right corner sealed Oxford's fate. Further tries by Read and Byrd helped surpass Cambridge's previous best, a 36-5 win in 1987.

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	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Runs to resort	Weather	Temp	Last snow
AUSTRIA						
Kitzbühel	50 170	good	wom	sunny	-1	7/8
Lech	100 170	good	good	sunny	-6	7/8
Mayrhofen	40 180	good	patchy	sunny	+2	7/8
Obergurgl	95 210	good	good	sunny	-1	7/8
BULGARIA						
Borovets	60 120	good	good	snow	-2	9/8
FRANCE						
Menbel	30 175	good	wom	sunny	+7	4/8
Montgenevre	120 210	good	good	sunny	-2	2/8
Thignes	165 365	good	good	sunny	+2	3/8
Val d'Aoste	10 110	good	good	sunny	+3	4/8
ITALY						
Cervinia	50 290	good	good	sunny	+5	2/8
M. di Campiglio	80 180	good	good	sunny	+6	1/8
NORWAY						
Gaio	60 90	good	good	sunny	-2	2/8
Lillehammer	45 60	good	good	sunny	-1	2/8
SWITZERLAND						
Arosa	95 120	good	good	sunny	-2	7/8
Davos	70 205	good	good	sunny	-6	6/8
Saas Fee	55 280	good	good	sunny	-7	4/8
Verbier	40 330	good	good	sunny	-2	3/8

SCORES: Oxford University: T. Davies, S. Bailey, M. Masters, H. Byrd, G. Read, A. Marchant, J. Spencer, J. Hall, J. Underwood, J. Leonard, J. Pridgen, V. Jones, C. Clark, D. Garbutt, M. Hynes, A. Mullins, H. Jones, S. Moore, M. Bedford, M. Johnson, A. Blackmore, P. Hargreaves, I. Rodber, M. Greenwood, S. O'Shea, J. Hall, N. Best, M. S. G. Clarke, P. Richards.

BBC1

- 6.00 Business Breakfast (73229) 7.00 BSC Breakfast News (7335774)
9.05 Kilroy. Robert Kilroy-Glick chairs a studio discussion on a topical subject (s) (6360497) 9.45 Ross King. Game show (s) (4658126)
10.00 News, regional news and weather (8421869) 10.05 Playdays. For the very young (s) (7452229)
10.30 Good Morning. With Anne and Nick. Weekday family magazine (6018316)
12.15 Pebble Mill. Alan Titchmarsh is joined by Michael Palin and Freddie Jones who talk about their forthcoming performances in Radio 4's *The Dresser* (s) (6054300) 12.55 Regional News and weather (6290339)
1.00 One O'Clock News with Philip Hayton. (Coast) Weather (37300)
1.30 Neighbours. (Coast) (s) (4454488) 1.50 Eldorado (s) (3505949)
2.20 Hawaii Five-O. The death of an undercover agent leads Sam Garrett to an air cargo hijacking ring. Starting Jack Lord (s) (4454403) 3.10 The Man Who Was Summer. The second of a two-part story about a Glasgow family who emigrated to Russia and ended up in Stalin's labour camps (s) (6538386)
3.50 The Adventures of Buzzy Bee and Friends. Country tales for the young (2850544) 3.55 Bites. Ideas for turning household junk into something useful (8094478) 4.10 Jeopardy. The second of a two-part Raymond Briggs story. *The Man* (8094403) 4.25 Quick Draw McGraw (s) (1819232) 4.35 The Animals of Farming World. Episode ten of a 13-part animated drama. (Coast) (s) (3089497)
5.00 Newsround. (7394565) 5.10 Century Falls. Episode four of the six-part science fiction thriller series by Russell T. Davies. (Coast) (s) (4605919)
5.35 Neighbours (s). (Coast) (489565). Northern Ireland: Inside Uster
6.00 Six O'Clock News with Anna Ford and Andrew Harvey. (Coast) Weather (671)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (923). Northern Ireland: Neighbours
7.00 Eldorado. (Coast) (s) (4658)
7.30 Tomorrow's World. News of newly-discovered underwater volcanoes and why a French village with 500 inhabitants boasts 300 water wells. (Coast) (s) (107)
8.00 May to December. The first of a new series of the generation gap romantic comedy starring Anton Rodgers and Lesley Dunlop. (Coast) (s) (7478)



Nicola Blackman, Marlene Gordon (8.30pm)

- 8.30 Us Girls. A new series of the comedy about a three-generation family. Grandmother Gloria Moore Hammond and Allister Bain keep a watchful eye on Bev and her daughter Alicia. With Nicola Blackman and Marlene Gordon. (s) (9213)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News with Michael Buick. (Coast) Regional news and weather (5045)
9.30 QED: The Bikes. (Coast) See Choice (29045)
10.00 Sportnight presented by Desmond Lynam. Football: highlights from tonight's top Premier League match. The commentator is John Motson; ice skating: action from the world championships in Prague; Motor Racing: a preview of the new formula one season which begins at the weekend in South Africa (s) (3487)
12.00 Weather (1505188). Ends at 12.05am
2.15 BBC Select. *Accountancy*. Television. Scrambled. (494885) 2.15-3.45 *Local Network*. Television. Scrambled. (90188) 4.00-4.50 TV. Edits: France Panorama 10. Scrambled. (8185343)

BBC2

- 6.45 Open University: Using the Aggregate Demand and Supply Model (4401478) 7.10 Humanity and the Seafood (3075310) 7.35 Language and Literature (7181519)
8.00 Breakfast News (3566562)
8.15 Westminster (4719294)
9.00 Daytime on Two. Educational programmes including, for children, 8.45 You and Me (4654768) 1.20 Animal Fair (9210310) 1.30 Crystal Tipps and Allister (8825107) 1.35 Banjo (8824478)
2.00 News and weather followed by You and Me (s) (23419749) 2.15 Canvas. An appreciation by Hugh Vickers of Duccio's *Madonna and Child*, which hangs at London's National Gallery (s) (2342584) 2.35 Countryfile. John Craven and Richard Mabey explore plants that thrive on hallowed ground (s) (6515292)
3.00 News (Coast) and weather (3951836) followed by Westminster Live introduced by Iain MacWhirter (5485107) 3.50 News (Coast) regional news and weather (2490497)
4.00 World Figure Skating Championships from the Veszprém Sports Hall in Hungary. The commentators are Alan Weeks and Barry Davies (4829587)
5.10 Horizon: Iceman. A repeat of Monday's programme about the 5,000 year old man found in an Alpine glacier in 1991. (Coast) (s) (1987688)
6.00 Star Trek: Classic science fiction series starring William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy and in this episode, John Collins (s). (Coast) (944774)
6.50 DEF II: Reportage. Can young people find happiness and fulfilment in the depths of the recession? (612953)



Free to reclaim the plains: the buffalo (7.30pm)

- 7.30 Nature: Where the Buffalo Roam. (Coast) See Choice (295125)
8.10 Timeswatch: The Pill - Prescription for Revolution. (Coast) See Choice (896519)
9.00 M*A*S*H. Henry is persuaded by Hawkeye and Trapper to investigate why innocent Korean civilians were injured in an attack (s) (793015)
9.25 Mr. Wong's Mysteries. Mystery. Story. Episode three of the four-part period drama starring Jonathan Pryce as the charismatic preacher John Wong. (Coast) (s) (7654519)
10.30 Newsnight with Jeremy Paxman (105671)
11.15 The Late Show. Arts and media magazine (s) (336229)
11.55 Weather (509636)
12.00 Literature in the Modern World. A look at the historical images of "Englishness" as a nationality, a language and a literary form (2413833)
12.25am Art in 15th-Century Italy. How Florence was transformed during the Renaissance (486492). Ends at 12.50
2.00 Night School TV. Personal and social development (78750). Ends at 4.00

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CHOICE



Aerodynamic ride: Chris Boardman (BBC1, 9.30pm)

QED: The Bikes
BBC1, 9.30pm
To followers of sport, and many besides, the bike can only mean one thing: the curious-looking monocoque design on which Chris Boardman won his Olympic gold medal. Back for a new series, QED shows how the bike was designed and built, and how it was used to win the gold medal. The bike was designed by Mike Burrows, the lone inventor, single-minded, obsessive and a bit dotty. He ran up the bike, lightweight and aerodynamic, more or less in his spare time. The cycling establishment was unimpressed. But eventually the rules changed, and the bike was used to win the gold medal. The bike was designed by Mike Burrows, the lone inventor, single-minded, obsessive and a bit dotty. He ran up the bike, lightweight and aerodynamic, more or less in his spare time. The cycling establishment was unimpressed. But eventually the rules changed, and the bike was used to win the gold medal.

Timeswatch: The Pill - Prescription for Revolution

BBC2, 8.10pm
The funny thing about the Pill is that the Americans who invented it hoped it would lead to a social revolution in the advanced world. Married women suddenly felt free. Younger single women also felt liberated. The Pill was a catalyst for change. As Rosie Boycott, founder of *Spare Rib*, puts it: "It was the first time that women could behave like men." Now, in the Aids era, the pill is no longer enough and women are having to rethink their sexual behaviour all over again. Sarah Hargreaves' film is rich in personal testimony, making telling use of archive material and sters a sane path through a tricky subject.

Dispatches

Channel 4, 9.00pm
The poll tax is dead, long live the council tax. Or so the Conservative party must hope, though in his latest television interview Nicholas Ridley predicts that the new levy will be no more popular than his predecessor. The poll tax was a catalyst for change. As Rosie Boycott, founder of *Spare Rib*, puts it: "It was the first time that women could behave like men." Now, in the Aids era, the pill is no longer enough and women are having to rethink their sexual behaviour all over again. Sarah Hargreaves' film is rich in personal testimony, making telling use of archive material and sters a sane path through a tricky subject.

Nature: Where the Buffalo Roam

BBC2, 7.30pm
A report from the heartland of the United States suggests that a wheel may be coming full circle. During the 19th century, enticed by the offer of free land, settlers moved westwards and pushed out the buffalo, the native dog and the antelope, not to mention the Indians. In the 1930s overcultivation produced the dustbowl and tragic migrations towards the Pacific. In the forties the discovery of a vast water table restored the mid-west as America's breadbasket. Now the water level is dropping, farms are going bankrupt and land is being abandoned. The good news is that the buffalo are coming back, and so are the other wildlife. See some of the nature's revenge, a retribution for ploughing up the plains. It is quite a sight.

Peter Waymark

ITV LONDON

- 6.00 GMTV with Michael Wilson, Eamonn Holmes and Fiona Armstrong (8052958)
9.25 Jeopardy! Steve Jones has the answers, the contestants have to supply the questions (8818823) 9.55 London Today (Teletext) and weather (7365749)
10.00 The Time... The Place... (1057774)
10.35 This Morning. Magazine series (6187854)
12.10 Allsorts. For the very young (s) (6166381)
12.30 Lunchtime News with Nicholas Owen and Sonia Russell. (Teletext) Weather (4288213) 1.05 London Today (Teletext) and weather (5768045)
1.15 Home and Away. Australian family drama serial. (Teletext) (877300) 1.45 A Country Practice. Medical drama (876671)
2.15 The Chrystal Rose Show. Claire Reynier joins a discussion on the way children are brought up. With Norris McWhirter and Leonard Johnston, a reformed borsaloi boy (868652) 2.45 Take the High Road. Drama serial set in the Highlands (904861)
3.10 ITN News headlines (392942) 3.15 London Today (Teletext) and weather (3961213) 3.20 Blockbusters (s) (6108584)
3.50 Cartoon. (Teletext) Speedy and Dilly (2807213) 3.55 Scooby Doo (s) (6185774) 4.10 Three Seven Eleven. Episode four of the ten-part children's drama set in a primary school (2802768) 4.40 Fun House. Spasick game show (8333774)
5.10 Home and Away (s). (Teletext) (6748315)
5.40 Early Evening News with John Suchet. (Teletext) Weather (530251)
6.00 London Tonight presented by Alastair Stewart and Fiona Foster. The guests include English National Opera star Lesley Garrett. Plus a look behind the scenes of the Express (45788)
7.00 This Is Your Life. Michael Aspel with a potted biography of another unsuspecting worthy (8125)
7.30 Country Street. (Teletext) (403)



On call: Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray (8.00pm)

- 8.00 Film: Ghostbusters 2 (1989) starring Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Sigourney Weaver. A sequel to the 1984 comedy horror success. Ghostbusters Dana call in her old friends, Peter, Raymond, Egon and Winston - known as the Ghostbusters - when she senses something supernatural about her eight-month-old son. Directed by Ivan Reitman (2687)
10.00 News at Ten with Trevor McDonald. (Teletext) Weather (90774) 10.30 London Tonight (Teletext) and weather (530251)
10.40 The Match. Highlights of tonight's Coca-Cola cup semi-final, second leg, between Arsenal and Crystal Palace at Highbury. Plus action from the First Division game between Newcastle United and Charlton Athletic (201294)
11.40 Film: Stranger on My Mind (1987) starring Tommy Lee Jones and Debra Winger. Drama about a Vietnam war veteran, now a Montana rancher, and his battles with government officials who want to take his land in order to expand a missile base. Directed by Larry Elikann (354328)
1.30 Entertainment UK. Leisure-time guide (10081)
2.30 The Chrystal Rose Show. (s) (59411)
3.00 The Little Picture Show. Video reviews (s) (79594)
4.00 801 Minutes. American news magazine (s) (46168)
5.00 Riviera. French drama serial (48898)
5.30 ITN Morning News with Tim Neilson (23898). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 Sesame Street. For the very young (s) (6488519)
6.45 Dennis. Animated adventures of a mischievous boy and his friends (9495565)
7.00 The Big Breakfast presented by Chris Evans and Gaby Roslin (27923)
9.00 You Bet Your Life. American game show hosted by Bill Cosby (s) (13671)
9.30 Schools (663881)
12.00 The Parliament Programme. Anne Perkins with a round-up of news from both Houses (50297)
12.30 Sesame Street. Early learning series. The guest is Robin Williams (83855) 1.30 Lift Off. Young children's entertainment (23590)
2.00 Film: They Made Me A Criminal (1939, b/w) starring John Garfield and Ann Sheridan. A drama about a champion boxer who goes on the run after finding he has killed a journalist. He makes for Arizona where he gets a job on a farm that doubles as a rehabilitation centre for young criminals. Directed by Busby Berkeley (610584)
3.40 The Quilter and The Last Cigarette. Two animations marking National No Smoking Day (2826318)
4.00 The Pulse. A repeat of yesterday's programme about the consequences of closing down long-stay geriatric wards (132)
4.30 Countdown. Words and numbers game (5285584)
5.05 Wednesday Weepee. Paula Yates with a true-life romantic story (282774)
5.15 Film: Merry or Murder? (1987) starring Robert Young and Michael Learned. A made-for-television drama about a retired doctor who kills his terminally ill wife and is charged with first degree murder. Directed by Steven Gethers (8376231)
7.00 Channel 4 News with Jon Snow and Zanele Badami. (Teletext) Weather (504690)
7.50 Political Comment from a Labour party politician (951300)



A new face in the close: Bryan Murray (8.00pm)

- 8.00 Brookside. Topical soap set in suburban Merseyside. (Teletext) (s) (6316)
8.30 Food File. Health secretary Virginia Bottomley gives her views on the high-fat diet and Colin Spencer reports on Europe's needless milk lake (2923)
9.00 Dispatches. See Choice (115346)
9.45 Short and Curious: The Zip. Dennis Lawson plays an office worker who wakes up one morning to find a large zip running down the front of his body (s) (85213)
10.00 The Golden Girls. On the occasion of Mies's birthday, Rose decides that the best present is a photograph of herself in her negligé. (Teletext) (s) (80758)
10.30 The New Statesman. Euro MP Alan B'Stard plots to lead the hapless Euro commission. Piers Fletcher-Davies into a neo-Nazi trap. Starring Rik Mayall and Michael Troughton (s) (453270)
11.05 ENG. Canadian drama series about a television news-gathering team (s) (138279)
12.05am Moviewatch. Norwich film-goers review the latest releases (s) (248523)
12.35 Do You Smoke? and Take Care. Two shorts to mark National No Smoking Day (3577053)
12.45 Film: Kananapa Aina Apua (1989). A Hindi drama about one man's fight against high-level corruption. Starring Dilip Kumar. Directed by B. Gopal (9340741)

VARIATIONS

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As London except: 2.15-2.45 Gardening Time (806952) 2.45-3.00 The Young Doctors (8108564) 3.00-3.30 The Young Doctors (8108564) 3.30-3.45 The Young Doctors (8108564) 3.45-4.00 The Young Doctors (8108564) 4.00-4.15 The Young Doctors (8108564) 4.15-4.30 The Young Doctors (8108564) 4.30-4.45 The Young Doctors (8108564) 4.45-5.00 The Young Doctors (8108564) 5.00-5.15 The Young Doctors (8108564) 5.15-5.30 The Young Doctors (8108564) 5.30-5.45 The Young Doctors (8108564) 5.45-6.00 The Young Doctors (8108564) 6.00-6.15 The Young Doctors (8108564) 6.15-6.30 The Young Doctors (8108564) 6.30-6.45 The Young Doctors (8108564) 6.45-7.00 The Young Doctors (8108564) 7.00-7.15 The Young Doctors (8108564) 7.15-7.30 The Young Doctors (8108564) 7.30-7.45 The Young Doctors (8108564) 7.45-8.00 The Young Doctors (8108564) 8.00-8.15 The Young Doctors (8108564) 8.15-8.30 The Young Doctors (8108564) 8.30-8.45 The Young Doctors (8108564) 8.45-9.00 The Young Doctors (8108564) 9.00-9.15 The Young Doctors 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SPORT

WEDNESDAY MARCH 10 1993

Atherton again left out by England as Emburey returns



Under the spotlights: Stewart will fill three roles for England in the one-day international which is the first match of the Sri Lankan leg of their winter tour

Fifa changes
age rules for
Olympic Games

Leading football players could take part in the Olympics as Fifa, the governing body of the world game, plans to allow three over-age players per team at the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta. João Havelange, the Fifa president, said yesterday that the under-23 age limit would be maintained for the qualifying rounds but lifted for three players a squad for the 16-team finals in the United States.

Fifa introduced the under-23 age limit wary that a full-scale tournament in the Olympics might diminish the World Cup. However, Fifa reconsidered following poor football attendances during the Barcelona Games. Havelange said Fifa was pressing ahead with plans for a parallel eight-team women's tournament at the Atlanta Games. Fifa last month submitted a plan to the Atlanta organisers that envisaged using the same match officials and venues at negligible extra cost. Havelange said that the president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Juan Antonio Samaranch, favoured the plan.

Andrew Young, a black former mayor of Atlanta and a member of the city's Olympic committee, pledged yesterday to help to bring the 2004 Games to South Africa. "It is an incredible amount of optimism to shoot for the Olympic Games in the year 2004," he told officials of the South Africa Olympic com-

mittee. "That says that all of your political problems will be solved, that your economy will be on even keel by 1998 when you have to make the bid," Young said.

"You have my support and prayers to make that dream come true... we owe you one and we'll pay you back." Young, a former US ambassador to the United Nations, said he believed one of the reasons the IOC chose his city for the 1996 Games was its diversity. "In many ways we have been through some of the democratic struggle that you're in the midst of, and I think the Olympics helped us a great deal to focus our attention, to realise diversity is a strength and that the only way to move forward is in peace," he said.

Milan is expected to announce the withdrawal of its bid to host the 2000 Olympics. An official said the political and economic crisis in Italy's financial capital "made the decision to withdraw a necessary choice." It was hoped that a withdrawal now might give the city a better chance to pursue the 2004 Olympics.

Milan is without a government following the resignation of the mayor, Giampiero Borghini, who had supported the bid. Milan's decision will be submitted to the IOC executive board in Atlanta next week. Still in the race as hosts are Peking, Berlin, Brasilia, Istanbul, Manchester and Sydney. The IOC makes its selection on September 23.

Stewart happy with
heavier workloadFROM PETER BALL
IN COLOMBO

ALEC Stewart intends to lead from the front. Not only will he captain England in the day-night international against Sri Lanka at Khetarama Stadium today, he will also open the batting as well as keep wicket. And he has not ruled out the possibility of doing the same in the Test match which starts on Saturday.

"When you are keeping wicket you are perfectly placed to see everything, and I've captained and kept wicket for Surrey, so we will talk about it," he said, which puts another question mark against the luckless Mike Atherton who was again disappointed yesterday.

England's response to losing their last two one-day games in India was to fall back on experience. John Emburey, the oldest member of the party, replacing Graham Gooch, a bowler for a batsman.

"We haven't bowled as well as we'd like in the last two games," Stewart said. "At Gwalior we went in with five seam bowlers so John Emburey will give us a bit of variety. He has come in because he is the best one-day bowler among the spinners."

Without the shadow of Sidhu hanging over him,

TEAMS

SRI LANKA: A Ranatunga (captain), R S Mahanama, U C Hathurusinghe, A P Gunaratne, P A de Silva, J P Thakurath, S T Jayasinghe, A M de Silva, R S Kalpage, H C P Ramaniyake, G P Wickramasinghe.

ENGLAND: A J Stewart (captain), R A Smith, G A Hick, N H Fairbrother, M W Gatting, C C Lewis, D A Reeve, J E Emburey, P A J DeFreitas, P W Jarvis, D E Malcolm.

back on experience. John Emburey, the oldest member of the party, replacing Graham Gooch, a bowler for a batsman.

"We haven't bowled as well as we'd like in the last two games," Stewart said. "At Gwalior we went in with five seam bowlers so John Emburey will give us a bit of variety. He has come in because he is the best one-day bowler among the spinners."

Without the shadow of Sidhu hanging over him,

Emburey may feel more confident than he eventually became in India, where he suffered at the hands of batsmen whom Keith Fletcher, the team manager, described as "the best players of spin that I've seen for a long time, if ever."

Sri Lankan batsmen have also been brought up against the turning ball. It will be interesting to see how effective the England spinners are against them, in the Test match if not in this one-day game on a pitch that is expected to be slow and flat.

The enthusiasm for variety did not spread as far as the inclusion of the left-arm Paul Taylor to offer a different angle among the seam bowlers.

For their part England's batsmen also can expect to be tested by spin, which has been Sri Lanka's main weapon

throughout their years as a Test-playing country.

The inclusion of Emburey means England are a batsman short and Lewis moves up to No. 6, a position he may yet come to occupy in the Test side. "Lewis has come on very well as a batsman," Fletcher said. "There were only a few pluses to come out of India. He got his first Test hundred, and scored runs consistently and he's also got a useful No. 7 behind him."

That is Dermot Reeve, who divides opinion more than any other player in the squad. Gooch was widely believed to be his strongest advocate in the selection committee. There does not appear to be anyone willing to press Atherton's claims so forcefully. "We have picked what we believe is our best one-day side," Stewart said.

Samways may be punished by FA

VINNY Samways, the Tottenham Hotspur midfielder player, could face disciplinary action by the Football Association for gestures made during his side's 4-2 FA Cup sixth-round win at Manchester City on Sunday.

Television cameras were focused on Samways when he was involved in a touchline clash with the City left back, Terry Phelan. The confrontation ended with Samways seemingly directing a V-sign at Phelan, which he reduced to one finger seconds later.

The referee, Ray Lewis, spoke to a linesman about the incident but no action was taken. All the after-match attention was on the late crowd invasion that forced a 15-minute hold-up and has led to City facing a crowd misconduct charge.

Lewis has to file a report to the FA regarding the booking of the Tottenham defender, Neil Ruddock. It is believed the Samways incident could also be mentioned.

Normally, players are charged when they have ges-

ticated at the crowd, but Samways still faces an anxious wait.

Manchester City are tightening security in the wake of the pitch invasion - starting with tonight's Maine Road Premier League match against Coventry City.

But the chairman, Peter Swales, who had replaced policing inside the stadium with private stewarding in an attempt to cut costs, refuses to divulge what he is planning.

City will thrash out the issue in detail tomorrow at a

meeting with the police, safety officer and council.

Meanwhile, the Football Supporters' Association suggested: "National standards of stewarding are necessary. They must be adopted by the FA, Premier and Football Leagues to ensure that operations are uniform and supporters are fully aware of the standards of behaviour expected."

The FSA added: "The football authorities must use every opportunity to develop supporter education."

Princess
plans
to resign
as FEI
president

BY JENNY MACARTHUR

THE Princess Royal is to stand down next year as president of the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), the ruling body for equestrian sports, after eight years in office.

The princess, who succeeded the Duke of Edinburgh as president in 1986, informed her executive committee on Monday. A formal announcement will be made to the general assembly of the FEI at its meeting in Rio de Janeiro this week.

Although the decision of the Princess Royal to stand down is said to have been taken "some time ago", largely for personal reasons, it follows recent criticism of her by Count Dieter Landsberg-Velen, an honorary vice-president of the FEI.

Last month, Count Landsberg, the president of the German Equestrian Federation, issued an open letter to other European presidents in which he said that because of the Princess Royal's duties she was not able to devote enough time to being president of the FEI at a time of expansion.

Ironically, a proposal that will be discussed this week advocates the introduction of an executive chairman who would handle the day-to-day activities of the FEI.

Malcolm Wallace, the director general of the British federation, said from Rio yesterday that this proposal was not expected to affect the princess's decision.

The FEI has expanded rapidly during her years in office and the job has become very demanding, he said. "Her time is limited. Her personal circumstances have changed. She has other interests and other things to do. No doubt as a member of the International Olympic Committee and as president of the British Olympic Association, she will endeavour to look after our interests as she has been doing."

The princess, a former European three-day event champion, has fought to keep equestrian sports in the Olympic Games. Her successor as president has not been determined.

Machine
will be
used to
catch
cheats

BY RICHARD EATON

A MACHINE to detect dangerous glues, and to stop players from cheating by using banned adhesives to attach their rubbers to the blades of their bats, has been approved by the International Table Tennis Federation.

This welcome step, hurried through in time for the world championships in Gothenburg in May, should reduce the administrative confusion which has threatened to disrupt the sport since the ITTF suddenly and controversially imposed a ban on all toxic glues just before Christmas.

Now competitors will have to pass their bats through a machine into which a bat is blown. If a bat contains strongly chlorinated or aromatic solvents, crystals in a tube will change colour as the air passes over them and out of the other side of the machine.

Random testing will take place with this device, and in the later rounds of the world championships the bats of all players will be tested. Those failing the test will be impounded and the players concerned disqualified.

The tests should prevent the sort of cheating that was alleged to have occurred during last month's European Top 12 championships in Copenhagen and during recent matches in the European League.

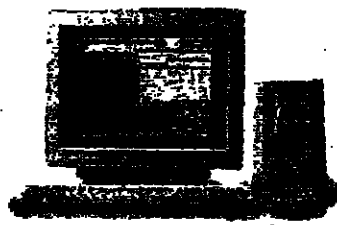
It is unlikely, however, to make a significant change in the tactical emphasis of the game by preventing the use of "fast" glues.

Some of the medically safe glues, apparently, still increase the speed of the ball off the bat and among the 17 glues presently approved by the ITTF are those which will help the attacking style of players such as Francis Jean-Philippe and Jorg Roßkopf, of Germany.

This may not therefore be to the advantage of England, which is likely to have four defensively-inclined players in its teams for the world championships.

English players since January have used not only non-toxic but "non fast" glues and the national council now has to decide whether to allow English players to use medically safe fast glues at the world championships.

MORSE

21st Century
Office.

WITH a new century less than seven years away, it doesn't require a genius to guess what computers will be like.

Fast. To harness the power of multiple, high speed processors, computers will need an operating system able to split tasks into bite-sized pieces.

Computers will run more graphics intensive programs. More than one at a time. They'll be multi-lingual, talking to other computers in the same room or on the other side of the world.

Workstations will be integrated with office telecom systems. Not just fax. Voice, data and video sent and received from your own computer.

21st Century computing is being done today with workstations from Sun, the world's fastest growing computer company. If your office is a century behind, please phone Morse for information.

Sun Microsystems
Computer Corporation
Authorized
Business Centre

"Sun's up there"
Sun Microsystems Ltd. 020 299 0000

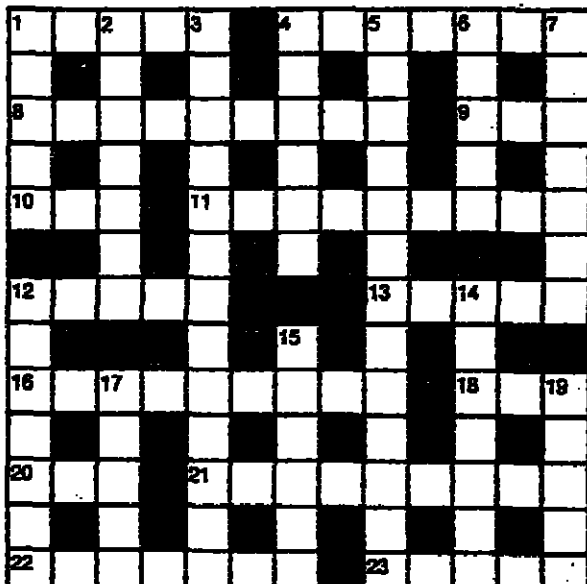
Morse Computers Ltd. 081-876 0404

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 362

- ACROSS
1 Great vitality (5)
4 Launched onto Stock Market (7)
8 Set free (9)
9 Piano lever (3)
10 Alphabet (1,1,1)
11 Nervous system study (9)
12 Wild Australian dog (5)
13 Christened (5)
16 Pre-eminent (9)
18 Fresh (3)
20 Race stage (3)
21 Depraved person (9)
22 Held up (7)
23 Go on knees (5)
- DOWN
1 Roman country house (5)
2 Point of no return (7)
3 Compassionate mission (6,2,5)
4 Intermittent (6)
5 Ex public school ring (3,3,7)
6 Japanese capital (5)
7 Not moved to tears (3-4)
12 Mottled (7)
14 Delegate authority to (7)
15 Thrown overboard (6)
17 Kinglike (5)
19 Roulette disc (5)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 3041
ACROSS: 1 Esprit 5 Stable 8 Lazy 9 Knee high 10 Eggs on 12 Nice 15 Sit on the fence 16 Harm 17 Armpit 19 Smoothie 21 Jeep 22 Egress 23 Argyle
DOWN: 2 Shanghai 3 Ray 4 Take note 5 Stew 6 Athleteism 7 Lag 11 Stormzone 13 Cochineal 14 De Valera 18 Ttut 20 Mug 21 Jog

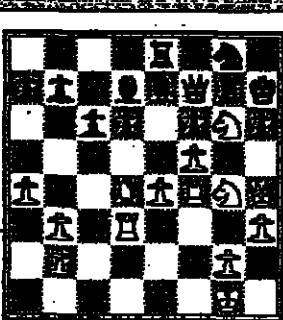
CROSSWORD ENTHUSIASTS: For mail order details of all Times Crossword Books and The Times Computer Crossword software with full levels (runs on most PCs), call Akom Ltd on 081 852 4575 (24 hrs) or CDS Doncaster on 0902 890 000. Also The Times Jumbo Crossword Book range: Book 1 (cypres) £6.99, Book 2 (cypres) £5.99, Concise Book 1 £5.99. Prices inc p&p from Akom Ltd., 51, Manor Lane, London SE15 6JW



By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

World champion Gary Kasparov has always cited the great champion Alexander Alekhine as his chess hero. This position is a variation from the game Alekhine-Marco, Stockholm 1912. How can white blast his way through to the black king?

Solution on page 40.



By PHILIP HOWARD

FLETTON
a. An arrow-maker
b. A sort of brick
c. A morass or mossy bog

TENEPROSO
a. A requiem mass
b. A style of painter
c. The undergrowth

LAMPYRID

a. A glow-worm
b. A family of Spartan kings
c. A torch-bearer

PULPITUM

a. Gum disease
b. A stone screen
c. A sermon

Answers on page 40.